OVER 200 DIGITAL CAMERAS AND ACCESSORIES TESTED AND RATED INSIDE

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA

JAM-PACKED ISSUE
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December 2005 Issue No.103 £4.20 (UK)

BIG TEST
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John Freeman
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Digital Divas
Shooting pop's princesses

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AOL Keyword: What Digital Camera

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WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA

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WELCOME...

...to our fun-packed December issue. At this time of year thoughts inevitably turn to Christmas. I don't know what you're hoping for from Santa this year but you'll have to have been very good indeed for it to be the new Canon EOS 5D. But after you've read our big test this month you may well be tempted to sell off some of the family silver to buy one anyway. If your sights are set a little lower, we've tested plenty of other cameras and accessories this month, covering a wide range of price bands.

If your budget is lower still, our main Photoshop tutorial shows you how to create your own personalised calendar – an ideal Christmas gift. We've also got several inspirational interviews, featuring great pictures and covering everything from glamorous pop diva portraits to the story behind the new movie Corpse Bride, with a bit of footie in between.

Don't forget, next month sees our annual Book of Tests. The biggest issue of the year, it features condensed versions of every camera test during 2005 plus a few new ones – that's 105 cameras in all. If you want to buy a camera this Christmas, don't miss it – it's out on 2nd December. Our next 'normal' issue will be our January issue, which features our annual awards and goes on sale on 30th December.

Nigel Atherton
nigel_atherton@ipcmedia.com

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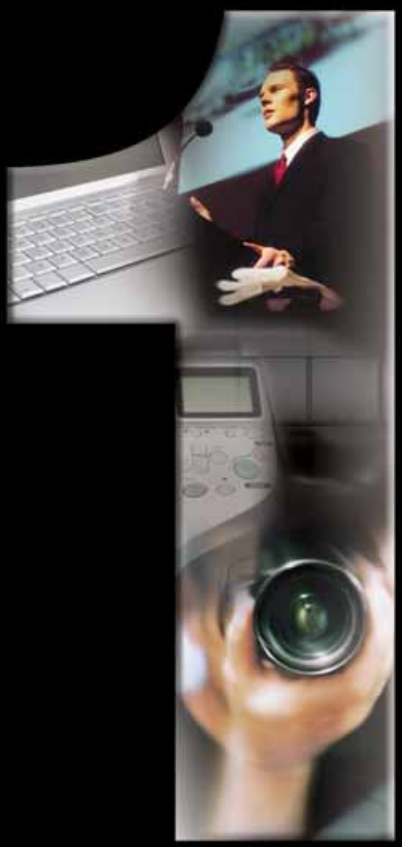

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WDC Letters

Something to say? Then drop us a line

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Tel: 020 7261 5323 Fax: 020 7261 5398 Email: wdc@ipcmedia.com

Save 'em, or lose 'em
Derek Swann

I read Nigel Atherton's amusing story about not printing his photos and I'd like to add a rather less amusing one myself. My dad died recently and his funeral was attended by several of his old army chums. An uncle of mine had a digital compact with him so I asked if he'd take a few pics of my dad's old gang. One of the old boys quipped, 'this may be the last time we're all together so make it a good 'un.' A few weeks later I asked my uncle for copies of the pictures. In short, there were none. It seems he hadn't saved them, then had accidentally reformatted his media card and deleted all the shots. Worse still, my dad's mate's quip proved quite prophetic; one of the gang passed away a month later. How I wish I'd had that last photo of them together to send to his family. My own photos go straight onto CD as soon as they're downloaded. It's a pity my uncle wasn't as careful.

PC crashed? Didn't back up your pictures? Oh dear

...and back 'em up, too
Ian Traynor

Nigel Atherton's Soundbyte (WDC Nov) at least had a happy ending. I bought my first PC four months ago and had some 1,000 images on it when it crashed.

Still under guarantee the hard drive was replaced and no, I hadn't backed up the images, which were all lost. Typically, I then had a tearful phone call from a friend whose dog had died suddenly and who asked if I could let her have some pics I'd shot of the animal a few weeks earlier. They'd been stored on my PC with a view to printing from them at a later date.

I was however able to locate some shots of the dog taken earlier on my film SLR and pacify my friend, but not so my niece to whom I'd promised an album of wedding shots taken in September and which had also been stored 'for the time being' on my PC.

I used to think those TV ads encouraging us to print our digital pictures were simply a way of relieving us of our cash. I know better now!

Hang the cost?
Geoff Crowther

I can't believe that you have conducted a review of four A3 printers without mentioning the cost of producing a print from them! I assume that you're not so insulated from the cost of printing on an inkjet printer that you're unaware of the vast

Letter of the month

this month's **STAR** prize

Good to be square
Paul Sedgwick

Why are monitor screens getting wider? Probably because Japan thinks we only want to view DVD movies, streaming video or games in wide-screen format. Totally wrong. We have perfectly good DVD players and televisions for doing that.

Digital cameras and camcorders are here to stay, but have you ever tried to show a portrait photograph on a SVGA or TV screen? You get an image sometimes reduced to about half the size of a standard landscape picture.

More and more camera clubs want to show digital images. After all, the old 35mm projector can handle both orientations of image on square projector screens without any problem. Unfortunately, even when using a digital projector on a square screen, the same height reduction occurs because both video cards and projectors are not designed to do anything else. Why

In this digital age it's not only photos that would benefit from a square screen. You'd also be able to view more of a Word document – the thing computers are used the most for, along with other portrait-format documents. When editing photos a square screen would mean there would always be an unused area of the screen to place the editing tools on.

Wake up video card, monitor/tv and projector manufacturers, you are missing out on a huge potential market.

WDC: *Square monitor screen? An interesting idea. Perhaps a widescreen that could be turned 90° (along with the content) would be an alternative option. I'd love to hear what other readers think.*

SoundByte

Stuck for what to buy everyone this Christmas? **Nigel Atherton** offers a few suggestions

Much has been made about the current retail slump, which has affected the photo trade just as it has everyone else. So here's an idea – why not do your bit to support your favourite photographic retailers by giving all your nearest and dearest a thoroughly picture perfect Christmas this year. Stuck for ideas? Then try these...

First, the kids. Yes of course they'll want their PlayStation games and Robodogs, but why not slip an inexpensive digital camera into Santa's sack too? You never know, it may spark a passion that could last them a lifetime, and what a great gift that would turn out to be. There are plenty for under £100 – see this month's Buyers Guide Supplement for a selection. Cameraless parents and grandparents may also like such a gift.

If they already have one, then how about a printer? Epson's latest PictureMate is small, unobtrusive, costs less than £100 and doesn't need a PC. Or there's Lexmark's P450. Lexmark has followed my suggestion in an editorial last year and produced the first 'no-PC-required' printer with a built-in CD burner, so photographers can archive the contents of their memory cards after they've printed them. (I'm still waiting for my royalty cheque for that one, by the way).

For the lady in your life I have just the thing: a Kodak Picture Viewer. My wife has been touting one of these around among her friends recently, loaded with pictures of the kids, and it's like catnip. Everyone who has seen one wants one, and several have already bought one. It's a credit-card-sized viewer with a 2.5" screen that holds over 100 pictures (and more, via the SD card slot) and costs under £100. It's a modern, electronic version of the flip photo album and is the perfect handbag accessory. If you ARE the lady in your life then get one for your mum.

Alternatively, the couch potato in your family may prefer to view their photos on TV, and there are a range of TV photo viewers from the likes of Sandisk that will let them, from around £30.

For granny, and others less enamoured with technology, how about a personalised calendar with pictures of the grandchildren on each month? You can order them from high street photo outlets such as Jessops and Snappy Snaps, or websites like Photobox and Snapfish. If they're a favourite granny some of these websites can also make you a nice, properly bound and printed hardback book filled with family photos. With die cut covers and a choice of suede, linen and other high-quality finishes they make a classy gift for about £25. Or perhaps you could persuade them to replace that faded old picture of The Haywain on the living room wall with a framed and mounted poster print of your leering face (or her poodle's). From under a tenner for an A3, without the frame.

So you see, you can satisfy all your family's needs this Christmas without leaving the cosy world of your photo retailer. Happy shopping!

Whodunnit?

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differences in cost between one printer and another? Surely this is just the sort of information that you should be providing? As your review states, there is relatively little difference in print quality between them – the startling difference I would suspect is in the cost per print!

Jamie Harrison replies: *Calculating the average cost of an inkjet print is a difficult task as there are so many variables. Ink use and coverage varies for different images, while single-ink and multi-ink cartridges further complicate the calculations. The wide variety of paper media and their differing costs is also a issue. It's easier to calculate a cost per print with ink and paper packs, such as those available for the Epson PictureMate, and we do quote those in our tests.*

Digital doubts

Sheila Phillips (Mrs)

I'm reading your August issue whilst having my lunch and am amazed at the comments on women photographers. I confess that I'm only reading it because my boss gave it to me, as I'm thinking of 'going digital'. I've just been on a college course to learn more about cameras and there were definitely more women than men on the course.

I'm not yet totally sold on digital SLRs. I find it easier to take a film in and get it developed than mess around with a computer. Maybe this is where men and women differ.

What happens when your PC crashes or technology changes (which it will) and you can't read CD Roms any more; will CD's last as long as prints? And it is so much easier to share a print than having everyone sitting around a computer.

Printing is just as easy with digital as with film and it isn't even necessary to own a PC if you use commercial labs, as you do now. Digital would still provide the benefits of instant feedback, low running costs and greater control. Archiving isn't an issue. Labs can burn CDs for you and disks will be around a lot longer than we will be – there are, after all, billions in use. But I'm not trying to convert you. At the end of the day it's each to their own and the important thing is that you're enjoying your photography, whatever medium you use. **NA**

Zut alors!

Nick Dunlavy

A word of warning for readers considering buying a camera from the internet. I recently bought a Pentax Optio 750z from the website of one of your advertisers and it arrived with a French manual. It seems that despite having a .co.uk domain, the site content being in English, and prices being quoted in Sterling, the company is actually based in France.

The website does tell you, if you look closely at the bottom of the third of the six information tabs, that the manual provided is in French – but if you already know the details of the camera you're buying, you are unlikely to read that part.

To get an English manual, you must either pay £20 to Pentax UK, or download and print for yourself the 200-page PDF version on the website.

Something borrowed

Kevin Wilson

It was sod's law that saw me being made redundant only two weeks after buying a PC. I'd paid cash for it but that left me short to buy even Photoshop Elements 3. In the meantime I borrowed a couple of books on digital imaging from the library. One contained a CD Rom featuring an Arcsoft image-editing set up. I installed it in my PC and am absolutely thrilled with it. Okay, it may not be a match for Photoshop but it cost me nothing and the book it came with explains everything about it, making it a doddle to understand. I'll eventually (new job permitting) move up to Photoshop but the Arcsoft editing suite will do me for now.

I'd advise newcomers to digital to seek out library books containing image-editing software. It costs nothing and you can always move up to something more sophisticated once you've grasped the basics.

WDC: *Thanks for the suggestion, Kevin. There's also lots of free software on the web, some of which is very good. Check out Gimp (www.gimp.org), Picasa (www.picasa.google.com) and Serif PhotoPlus (www.freeserifsoftware.com).* **NA**

Web Forum Chat

Colour matching

Posted by: junyer
Board: Digital Darkroom
How can I get the same colour on my prints as I see on my PC monitor?

Posted by: David Steel
Remember, the screen is not a printer, it works differently (transmitted RGB). Prints are CMYK viewed by reflected light. You'll see a greater dynamic range on a print than on screen. Calibration helps but isn't perfect. I get images how I want on-screen, adjust to get a good print and record the correction.

Create a test page from an image that has a range of colours and flesh tones. Maybe add a greyscale and colour swatch. Reduce the image size and duplicate it across an A4 page. Using Variations, apply different 'corrections' to each image say, one column to be density +/- a few steps and the same for the CMYK colours. Record the setting under each image. Do a print and see which is the best. You might have to repeat the exercise in smaller steps.

From that, you should be able to tell what corrections you need to apply to the on-screen image to get a matched print. Apply this to every print, perhaps saving the value and applying them with an action. Repeat the process for each type of paper you use.

The screen will never match the printer 'as is'. You'll have to adjust one to match the other by either adjusting the screen which is hit or miss (I assume you have the black point set correctly) or by using a 'correction' at print time.

DVD slide show

Posted by: Hang-Ten
Board: Digital Darkroom
I'm planning to put together a DVD slide-show of images for display on TV. It appears that the resolution of the images should ideally be set to 768 x 576 for UK PAL TV, but I'm getting confused as to the optimum dpi setting. Has anyone any suggestions?

Posted by: Alexr
Ignore DPI settings or use the default. It's the number of horizontal and vertical pixels that matter, not DPI. There are only two classes of device in the universe that take any notice of DPI settings: scanners and printers. Everything else ignores the DPI and, unless you're outputting to a printer, so should you.

Our survey said...

QUESTION: Which type of subject do you most enjoy photographing?

Landscape	31%
Nature	21%
Portraits	14%
Travel	13%
Erotic	12%
Sport	6%
Still Life	3%
Reportage	1%

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Sony Cyber-shot N1 With Touch-Screen LCD

8MP compact incorporates touch-screen technology

The N1 is the latest addition to the Cyber-shot range, featuring an 8MP Super HAD CCD and Carl Zeiss Vario-Tessar 3x optical zoom.

Constructed from aluminium, the **N1** is 22.7mm deep and incorporates a 3in LCD composed of 230,000 pixels that can be operated by touching the screen. Improved resolution is promised thanks to Clear Photo LCD Plus technology, which features an anti-reflection layer designed to reduce the effect of reflections and features an enhanced 65% colour ratio.

Among the new features found on the N1, Clear RAW NR is designed to reduce the effects of noise when shooting up to ISO 800 in low-light conditions. Pocket Album can be used to store up to 500 favourite photographs, which are preserved as VGA files in a separate internal memory and can also be viewed on a television. Slideshow with Music has four selectable styles – active, nostalgic, stylish and simple – each with background audio that you can use to accompany slideshows of your pictures, with the option through the supplied Picture Package software to add your own music.

Auto-focusing options include: Multi-Point, Centre Weighted, Spot and Free Spot, which you can control by using the touch panel. An AF illuminator assists in low-light conditions.

An enhanced signal-to-noise ratio, 1.65-second start-up and improved colour reproduction are promised from Sony's Real Imaging Processor, while the STAMINA battery can capture 300 pictures from a single charge (according to CIPA standard).

Other features include: PictBridge compatibility enabling printing directly from the camera, 26MB internal memory, eight scene modes including Snow, Beach and Twilight, manual exposure and a live histogram. Photos can also be taken in widescreen (16:9) format, and the N1 can capture 640x480 MPEG Movie VX Fine movies at a rate of 30fps.

Supplied with the N1 are a lithium-ion battery, charger, wrist strap and software CD. Sony has yet to announce a price for the Cyber-shot N1, which will be available at the end of November.

Find out more at **www.sony.co.uk** or by calling **08705 111999.**

Pentax & Samsung Join Forces

Pentax and Samsung have announced an agreement to develop digital SLRs, incorporating technology from both manufacturers.

The newly developed SLR cameras will integrate Pentax's experience in manufacturing interchangeable lenses, including Penta Prism technology, alongside Samsung's image-processing technology, convergence technologies and brand recognition.

Pentax has already released a selection of digital SLRs, the most recent being the *ist DL. The move, however, marks Samsung's first foray into the digital SLR market, following the announcement of the Pro815 camera in June, a prosumer camera with an 8MP sensor and 28-420mm lens.

The announcement follows news we brought you in our September issue, that Konica Minolta and Sony would be developing digital SLRs and comes at a time when the lucrative DSLR market is steadily growing.

A release on the Pentax website states: 'Through combining their individual strengths and working together in synergy, Pentax and Samsung are devoted to supplying attractive digital camera products to the needs of individual markets.' A comment from Samsung states: 'The partnership will be based on sharing their respective competencies to enhance competitiveness in digital cameras.'

To find out more about Samsung or Pentax products, visit **www.samsungcamera.com** or **www.pentax.co.uk**

Olympus Inches Ahead

The SP-700 is the latest addition to Olympus's compact range, with a 6MP CCD and the largest LCD screen of any Olympus digital camera.

Featuring a 3x optical f/3.3-4.0 lens with a focal length equivalent to 38-114mm in a 35mm camera, encased in a metal body, the 3-inch sunshine LCD is composed of 230,000 pixels.

Twenty-four scene modes are on the SP-700 including: Portrait, Snow, Night scene and Beach. You can also use the camera underwater with the PT-013 underwater case, which is available separately.

Alongside standard macro mode, super macro mode can focus from as close as 1cm from the subject.

Evaluate adjustments to your photographs with the Compare and Shoot function, which enables you to compare photographs and make changes to the sharpness, brightness and red eye reduction.

Other features include a calendar function, Label Shot, 11MB internal memory, panorama, 2-in1 function and VGA movie recording at 30fps.

Olympus has yet to confirm a price for the SP-700, which will be available before Christmas. You can find out more at **www.olympus.co.uk** or by calling 0800 072 0070.

Sensitive Duo

Featuring a market-leading sensitivity range of ISO 80 –1600 for low-light shooting, the F11 is the follow-up to the award winning FinePix F10, with additional aperture and shutter priority exposure modes.

Promising a 1.3-sec start time and 0.01-sec shutter lag between AE/AF lock and exposure, the **F11**'s f/2.8-5 lens has a focal length equivalent to 36-108mm in 35mm terms. There's a 2.5in LCD, and up to 500 photos can be taken from a single charge. Other features include 5cm macro, VGA movie capture with sound at 30fps and PictBridge compatibility.

Hot on the heels of the award-winning Z1, Fujifilm has announced the **FinePix Z2**, boasting an extended sensitivity to ISO 1600. Featuring a 5MP Super CCD HR sensor, the resolution of the 2.5in LCD has been increased to 232,000 pixels. The 3x optical zoom is 36-108mm.

No price has yet been announced for the Z2 or F11. For more details, see **www.fujifilm.co.uk** or call 0870 084 1310.

D-lightful

Leica's new compact, the D-Lux 2, features an 8.4MP CCD, 4x optical zoom and optical image stabilisation.

The aluminium-bodied camera has a Leica DC Vario-Elmarit f/2.8-4.9 ASPH lens with a focal length of 28-112mm (35mm equivalent). Macro shooting is possible from 5cm at wideangle and 30cm at telephoto.

Designed to produce sharp pictures in low-light at telephoto, the optical image stabiliser (OIS) reduces camera shake. Pictures can be taken in three formats: 16:9 (for Widescreen TVs), 3:2 and 4:3 in RAW, TIFF or JPEG file formats.

The 2.5in LCD screen is composed of 207,000 pixels and, in addition to Program, Shutter and Aperture priority and Manual exposure modes, the D-Lux 2 has 14 scene modes including Portrait, Night-time landscape, Party, Snow, Food, Baby and Soft for skin.

Metering options include multi-field, sport and centre-weighted integral, and shutter speeds range from 60-1/2000 sec. Other features include USB 2.0, PictBridge and Di-giscoping with the new Digital Adapter 2 (£138).

The Leica D-Lux 2 will be available at the end of November for £548. Find out more at **www.leica-camera.com** or by calling 01908 666663.

snap shots

UPDATE TO NIKON CAPTURE

Available to download from the Nikon website, version 4.3.2 is the latest update to Nikon Capture, rectifying an error that caused the program to close unexpectedly.

The fault occurs when adjustments are made to photographs using the Color Boost slider, displayed by selecting Better Quality in the D-Lighting palette.

In order to download the version 4.3.2 update, users must have Nikon Capture 4.3.1 already installed; anyone with an earlier version will need to ensure they update to version 4.2 then 4.3.1.

For more information and to download the update log onto http://support.nikontech.com/cgi-bin/nikonusa.cfg/php/enduser/std_alp.php?p_sid=id*5QfRh

CANON FEMALE PHOTOJOURNALIST AWARD REVEALED

Claudia Guadarrama from Mexico is the winner of the fifth Canon Female Photojournalist award for her photographs depicting illegal migrants on the South Mexican border.

The first award was presented in 2001, with the aim to draw attention to the work of women photojournalists. Guadarrama was presented with the award at the Visa pour l'Image festival in France. She wins an 8000-euro grant from Canon, which she can use to pursue a year-long documentary project that can be presented at next year's festival.

MEMORYSTICK PRODUCTS INTRODUCED INTO FUJIFILM'S CARD RANGE

Memory Stick Duo, Memory Stick Pro and Memory Stick Duo Pro cards have been added to Fujifilm's memory card line-up.

The announcement follows the UK release of Sony's handheld games console, PSP, which includes a card slot and has the capability to view digital photographs. The move now means that Fujifilm-branded cards are available for every card format, the Memory Stick Duo Pro and Memory Stick Pro fitting into the professional range.

To find out more about Fujifilm products, call 0870 084 1310 or log onto **www.fujifilm.co.uk**

ALIEN SKIN EYE CANDY 5 PLUG-IN BUNDLE

Incorporating three Eye Candy Titles: Textures, Nature and Impact, the money-saving plug-in bundle from Alien Skin, Eye Candy 5, includes a total of 30 filters.

Eye Candy: Textures features 10 texture generators and can replicate a range of surfaces including: fur, brick, snake, lizard skin and stone. Fire, smoke, rust, ice and snow can all be replicated in Nature, while Impact can be used to create chrome effects, perspective shadows and glass buttons.

Compatible with Photoshop 7 (and later) Photoshop Elements 2, Corel Paint Shop Pro 8 (and later) and Macromedia Fireworks MX 2004 (and later), Eye Candy 5 can be used with 16-bit (and CMYK) images. It is available for use on both Windows and Macintosh platforms.

Retailing at approximately £113 ($199), the bundle represents a saving of £57 ($100) on the individual sale price. Find out more at **www.alienskin.com**

BenQ Trio Includes Smallest 6MP Compact

The DC X600, DC C800 and DC C500 are three new additions to BenQ's digital compact line-up.

Billed as the 'world's smallest 6MP camera' the **DC X600** is 19mm deep and has a 3x optical f/2.7-5.2 Pentax lens incorporating Super-Multi Coating (SMC). Pictures can be viewed on the 2.5in LTPS LCD screen, and the X600 can capture VGA movies at 3fps.

Filter effects can be added in-camera, which enables picture resizing, rotating and movie editing. It has a suggested retail price of £199.

The BenQ **DC C800** is an 8MP camera with a f/2.8-5.1 3x optical zoom and 2.4in TLT LCD and a retail price of £150. Available in black and silver, it features a 32MB internal memory, sound recording, four-shot Burst Mode and a Printer Mode that enables users to print directly from the camera.

Featuring a fixed-focus f/3 lens, the £79 **DC C500** is aimed at the budget user. It has a 5MP CCD, 1.7in LCD and is PictBridge compatible.

The BenQ X600 and C800 will hit the shops in November, and the C500 is available now. For more information, see **www.benq.com** or call 01442 301000.

LENS NEWS

Tamron Macro

The AF 55mm-200mm f/4.5-5.6 is a macro lens from Tamron exclusively for use with digital SLRs.

Weighing 300g, the lightweight lens has a small image circle ensuring compatibility with Canon AF, Konica Minolta AF-D and Nikon AF-D mounts.

Constructed from 13 elements in 9 groups, the new optical design includes a Low Dispersion (LD) element to compensate for chromatic aberration, while ghosting and flare are kept to a minimum through Internal Surface Coatings.

The lens enables a minimum focusing distance over the entire zoom range of 95cm and the nine-blade diaphragm construction is designed to produce natural blurred effects when needed. For better handling, Tamron has enhanced the zoom and focus controls.

The **55-200mm f/4.5-5.6** lens costs £129.99 and is available from **www.intro2020.co.uk**

Call 01628 674411 for more information.

Convert With Sigma

Newly designed for use with Sigma telephoto and telephoto zoom lenses, the APO Tele Converter 1.4x EX DG and APO Tele Converter 2x EX DG are digitally optimised converters from Sigma.

They are designed to fit between the lens and camera body without affecting autofocus speed. Reduced flare and ghosting is promised from the multi-layer coating and lens design.

Extending the focal length to 1.4x that of the original lens, the **APO Tele Converter 1.4x EX DG** is built from five elements in three groups. Its size is 68.5x19.5mm and it weighs 160g.

Constructed from six elements in five groups the **APO Tele Converter 2x EX DG** increases the focal length by 2x. It measures 68.5x52mm and weighs 235g. Both have a f/2.8-32 aperture.

Head to **www.sigma-imaging-uk.com** or call 01707 329999.

Nikon Has A Solution

Nikon's Solutions Expo is a free two-day exhibition offering professional photographers and enthusiasts the chance to try new kit and get advice on improving workflow and productivity.

Held at Olympia Conference Centre, London, on 22 and 23 November, Solutions Expo has four themed seminars: Image Capture, Hardware, Process and Output. Meanwhile, there are three tableaux offering advice on a live action shoot, still life and macro, and a fashion, bridal and portrait runway.

Adobe, Epson, Apple Solution Experts, HP and Mitsubishi Electric will all be presenting, giving visitors a chance to try the latest equipment and software and of course ask any questions. Visitors can obtain comment on their photos by sending their photos to the partners' stands through a wireless infrastructure.

Solutions Expo is free to enter and will be open from 10am – 6pm. To register, log onto **www.solutions-expo.co.uk**

For more information call 01628 401951.

Play with your food.

EOS 350D DIGITAL

Half-eaten, mashed or melted – food offers a photographic feast. And as the EOS 350D digital SLR is compatible with all the lenses in Canon's EF range you can be more creative with your shots, turning a dinner table into a playground.
The EOS 350D. It's playtime. www.canon.co.uk

you can

Canon

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

OFFICIAL SUPPLIER

snap shots

FUJIFILM RELAUNCHES PAPER RANGE WITH TWO NEW TYPES

Photo Enthusiast and Super Heavyweight paper has been added to Fujifilm's Multijet range, which has been relaunched with new packaging.

Designed for use with inkjet printers, the Photo Enthusiast paper is available in A4 size at a weight of 240gsm, in both satin and gloss finishes. A gloss-pigmented version is also available that is optimised for use with pigmented printers.

Aimed at professional and commercial users, the A4 Super Heavyweight paper has a weight of 300gsm to ensure it survives continuous handling, whether used in a portfolio or workplace. A gloss-finish version is available, which is resin coated and microporous.

Log onto **www.fujifilm.co.uk/digital/multijet**

2MP CAMERA PHONE FROM PANASONIC

The VS6 is a new clamshell camera phone from Panasonic, with a 2MP camera and Bluetooth for remote sharing of photographs. Incorporating a one-touch auto function, the 2MP camera features a 5x digital zoom and includes a 15-frame burst mode. It can capture moving images with sound that can be stored on the 32Mb internal memory.

The 2.2in LCD screen is capable of displaying 16 million colours; it is also 50% brighter than the screen found on the previous camera phone from Panasonic. With dimensions of 96x46x21mm and weighing 101g, the phone boasts a built-in Sonic the Hedgehog game. Message illumination flashes different colours depending on the message 'emotions.' The Panasonic VS6 also supports Java and provides up to eight hours of talk time and 430 hours of standby time.

The VS6 will be available from Carphone Warehouse in November.

DXO OPTICS PRO 3.5

DxO has announced the latest version of its image-enhancement software aimed at digital SLR users. New to version 3.5 is the DxO Optics Engine version 2, which is designed to increase the level of image detail, improve the process of removing colour fringing, enable the user to define the cropping area retaining 40% more surface when removing geometric distortion. Batch processing speeds are twice as fast as version 3.0; viewing photos and making selections is easier and faster thanks to improvements to the interface.

DxO Optics Pro 3.5 is available on Macintosh and Windows platforms. Registered owners of version 3.0 can upgrade for free. Find out more at **www.dxo.com**

STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 2005 LAUNCHED

Budding student photographers will be out looking for inspiration once again to become Olmec's Student Digital Photographer of the Year 2005. The competition, sponsored by ICI Imagedata, is open for entries from students studying photography either full or part-time.

This year's theme 'Images for life' is split into three categories – People, Places, and Still Life. The overall winner will receive £2000, each category winner will receive £250, and the winning college or university will receive £500 worth of Olmec products. The closing date is 6 March, 2006. To enter head to **www.ici-imagedata.com** or call 01206 716322.

SOFTWARE NEWS

Roxio Takes It Easy

Photo, video and music capabilities have been enhanced in Roxio's Easy Media Creator 8.

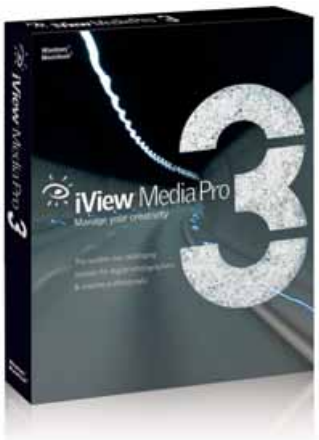
The program incorporates 25 applications that can be accessed from Media Creator Home, while the new Task Assistants enables users to quickly create cards and calendars.

Incorporating zooming, music, title slides and narration, slideshows can be exported in widescreen 16:9 and standard format, to VCD and DVD. Share photographs from your computers with family and friends using LiveShare, which functions as an email web link. Information – including photographs and videos – can be shared between several computers on the same network with My Media Space.

DVD authoring program MyDVD from Sonic Solutions can be used for burning DVDs with multi-chapter menus. Information can be burnt, using multiple drives and across multiple discs. DVD Music Disc can burn up to 50 hours (65 albums) of Dolby quality music onto a disc along with DVD menus that can be navigated using a remote control. MusicID rectifies and adds ID3 tag information – including title, genre and artist – to music files. Other features include DivX 6 support, video-editing with VideoWave.

Easy Media Creator 8 will retail for £59.99 and is available from many retailers as well as **www.roxio.com**

Manage With iView



The latest version of iView's photo-management software, Media Pro 3.0, has enhanced organisation, searching and archiving tools.

The new Pro Lightbox enables you to view up to four pictures simultaneously, display histo-grams, and zoom in and out.

When you import files, Dynamic File Import Control can rename them, add annotations and copy them to folders. Improvements to the interface enable you to specify what metadata to display, save catalogue layouts and adjust IPTC terms. File support has been extended to Microsoft Word, WMV, WMA, Rich Text format and archived Web files. Web pages can be created using technology like Cascading Style Sheets instead of HTML, before being uploaded directly onto a server using FTP.

iView MediaPro 3.0 is compatible with Windows and Mac platforms and available for $199 (£113) from **www.iview-multimedia.com**

Get Organised like a Pro

ACD Systems has introduced a new version of its photo-management software.

ACDSee Pro Photo Manager can be used for organising, editing, and archiving photos. Save valuable workflow time by re-sizing, renaming and saving, as well as sharpening, noise reduction and cropping multiple files at the same time using the batch-processing feature.

You can also organise photographs into categories using a selection of tags, then search for them using the Quick Search bar. The program supports ICC and ICM colour profiles for accurate printing and viewing.

As well as providing DNG support, the program supports RAW file formats from Canon, Nikon, Olympus, Fujifilm, Konica Minolta and Pentax, enabling you to process RAW files.

Rectify under and overexposed sections of your photo using the Shadow/Highlight tools and fix them with the Photo Repair tool.

Photos can be compiled into slideshows with music, burnt onto CD, archived or printed; a selection of HTML templates can be used for creating web pages.

Available for Windows 2000 and XP, there is no UK launch date for ACDSee Pro Photo Manager, which costs around $129.99 (£74). Users of ACDSee 8 can upgrade for a special price. Log onto **www.acdseepro.com**

Gissa Jobo

Giga ONE is a 30Gb portable storage drive from Jobo that functions as a 10-in-1 card reader.

Constructed from aluminium, it features a fast USB 2.0 transfer, enabling photographs to be transferred from a range of card formats incldluding CompactFlash I and II, SecureDigital, MultiMedia Cards, MemoryStick, MemoryStick Pro, MemoryStick Duo and xD-Picture Cards using three flash media slots or from a computer. Weighing 254g, Giga One takes seven minutes to transfer 1GB of data from a CompactFlash card.

Information about the transfer status, available hard drive space, the type of memory card being used and remaining battery life is displayed on the 1.8in LCD screen.

Jobo **Giga ONE** will retail for £109.99. To find out more details head to **www.intro2020.co.uk** or call 01628 674411.

Magic storage

Cardmedia has announced that the DigiMagic DM180 1.8" portable storage drive is now available in capacities of 40Gb and 60Gb.

Pictures can be transferred onto the device at the push of a button from a selection of memory cards, including CompactFlash I/II, Memory Stick, SecureDigital and xD, using built-in card slots. A backlit LCD displays information about the file transfer, including the remaining hard drive capacity.

With dimensions of 79 x 89 x 30.5mm, the DM180 is small enough to fit into a pocket, and a built-in battery enables photographers to back up their photos while on location. Promising 120 minutes of use from a single charge, the battery can be recharged using a USB 2.0 cable connected to either a PC or Mac.

The Digimagic DM180 40Gb retails for £235 and the 60Gb drive is £280. It is supplied with a carrying case, USB cable, Universal AC Power Adapter and manual.

To find out more about the Digimagic DM180, visit **www.card-media.co.uk** or telephone 0870 240 6574.

iPod Gets Into Video

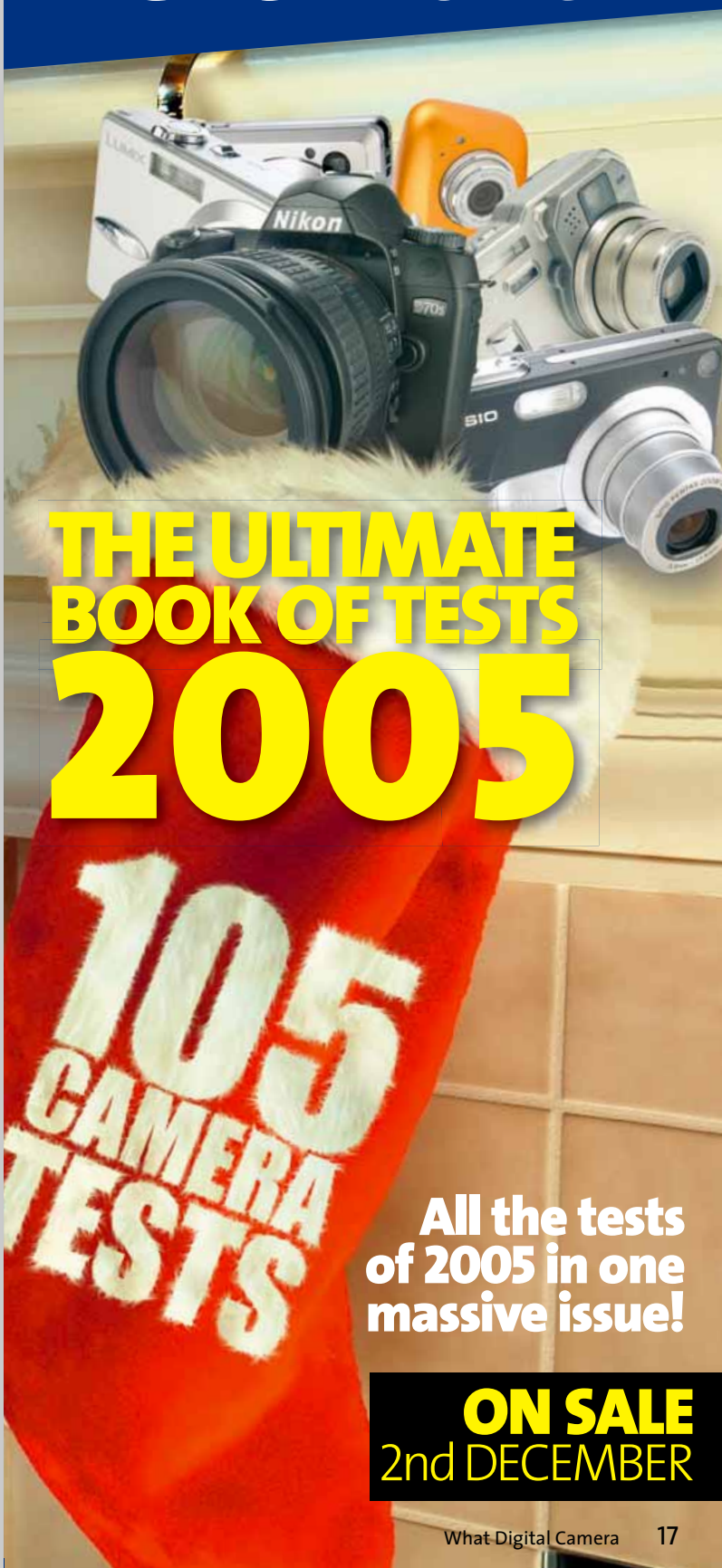
An enlarged LCD and video capabilities both feature on the new iPod from Apple, providing the potential to watch TV shows on the move.

Digital photographers can store 25,000 photos, 15,000 songs or over 150 hours of video on the iPod, which is available in black and white, and in 30GB and 60GB capacities. Users can transfer home movies onto the iPod and view them on the 2.5in LCD.

A deal with ABC in America means that US owners of the iPod can buy and view five ABC television programmes through iTunes 6 at a cost of $1.99 each, along with 2000 music videos. Apple is in discussions with TV networks regarding content for the UK audience.

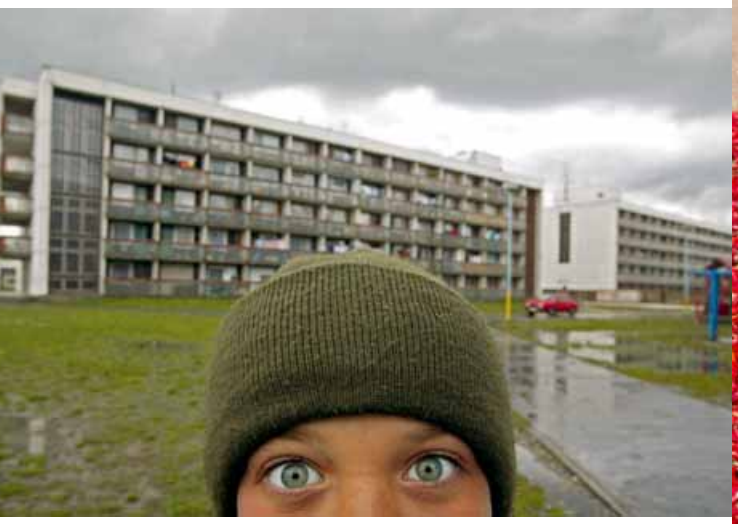
Both available next week from the Apple store, the iPod 30GB will cost £219, and the 60GB drive £299. See **www.apple.com**

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA
Next Month



All the tests of 2005 in one massive issue!

ON SALE 2nd DECEMBER



READ

One People Many Journeys

Co-ordinating author
Don George
Lonely Planet Publications
£25

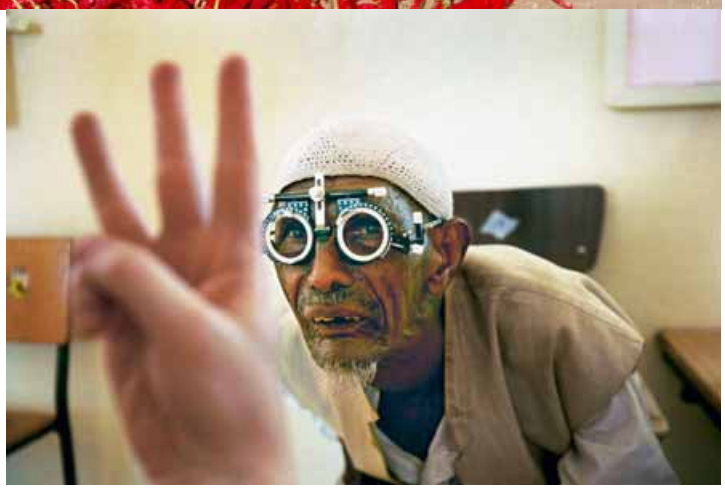
A must for anyone interested in travel photography, One People contains 255 photos of people of different races and ages from all over the world.

As each page is home to just one picture, this gives plenty of space to each photo, enabling you to get the full impact.

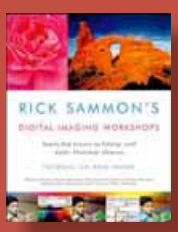
The book is structured to resemble a lifecycle starting with breathe, then progressing onto: play, live, work, love, celebrate and reflect, before ending with die. Each new chapter features an essay by leading travel photographers, including: Don George, Joe Cummings and Kate Armstrong.

Like other Lonely Planet photography books the standard of photography is superb. One People is packed with colour and life, drawing at your emotions, making you laugh, cry and gasp. My favourites include: women sorting red chillies from India; a young boy overloaded with watering cans in Afghanistan; a Russian woman sitting on her sofa in front of a wall covered in bullet holes; and explorers in Antarctica.

Retailing at £25 for the hardback edition, One People would make a great Christmas present for aspiring travel photographs or anyone interested in other cultures. **HB**



Images from One People. **Top Left:** © Balazs Gardi **Top:** © Dallas Stribley **Above:** © Tim Dirven



Rick Sammon's Digital Imaging Workshops

W.W. Norton
£16.55 ($29.99)

This book is aimed at novices, most of it explaining in depth (with photographic examples) Photoshop Elements features. Workshops in the latter half examine what you can do with the tools, and, while the results of Sammon's tutorials may not be to everyone's taste – with a distinctly American feel – the user-friendly layout and language should inspire. The CD contains a paltry two video tutorials, and 34 tutorial images from each workshop. **HB**

Creative Vision

Jeremy Webb
AVA £24.95

For many people photography is about more than pressing a shutter, it is about expressing yourself, and that's where this book comes in: it offers inspiration to help you harness your Creative Vision.

Split into 10 chapters including: Film with digital, Cameraless photo-art and Montage, the book's emphasis is on encouraging the reader to experiment. A proportion of the book focuses on film; however it is packed with inspiring ideas – particularly for fans of Adobe Photoshop. Some people may find Creative Vision pretentious, however the friendly language and interesting imagery ensures that this book is recommended. **HB**

The Essential Black and White Photography Manual

Mike Crawford
Rotovision £25

From sepia toning to sharpening and softening and choosing paper, this manual covers the basics. The book is aimed at those already familiar with their camera; more emphasis is placed on post-production work – including printing – than the process of taking photos. While information related to film is of less relevance, this richly illustrated book is useful for anyone interested in b&w photography, though the £25 asking price is steep. **HB**

Top Left: Burning London commuter train, © James Pearson
Above: Gwyneth Paltrow, © Megan Victoria
Left: Bono, © Evandro Inetti

Scoopt
SELL YOUR PHOTOS TO THE PRESS
Who will take tomorrow's front page photograph - a professional press photographer or a passer-by armed with a cameraphone or a digital camera?
SCOOPT FRONT PAGE EXCLUSIVE

SURF

www.scoopt.com

Sell your photos to the press

Some of the most memorable images from the London bombings earlier this year were captured by survivors using digital camera phones and relayed over the television networks. Camera phones enable people to take photographs quickly – and relatively discreetly – be it a national disaster or a celebrity, and Scoopt.com is a website that aims to help members of the public make money from these pictures.

In the past if you wanted to sell your photograph to a picture agency, you would probably receive a flat fee and surrender your copyright, but Scoopt aims to get a fair deal for the photographer. Scoopt retains a three-month exclusive licence for every photograph sent to it; however you still own the copyright, and receive around 50% of the profit each time the photo is re-licensed for use.

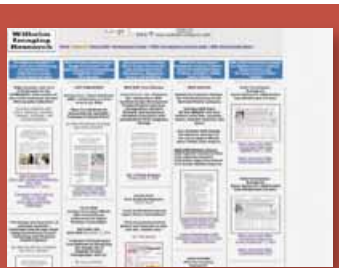
You need to be registered to sell a photo. Registration, however, is free and quickly done online, and once registered you can send photos into Scoopt directly from a camera phone or by uploading it to a computer. The website is plain, but functional, presenting the information is a clear way, using comprehensible language. **HB**

www.dreamstime.com

Photographers can make money from digital pictures by registering at this royalty-free agency. Images must be submitted as JPEGs and be at least 2MB in size. You get 50-70% commission on each photo and you can also earn extra money through a referral system. Downloadable free images are available for use in your work. **HB**

www.digicamhelp.com

Describing itself as a 'Digital camera guide for beginners and beyond,' this site contains useful information about buying a camera, looking after it, taking pictures and enhancing them. The site isn't as detailed as some others, but the information is easy to follow, and links in the text explain complicated information. **HB**



www.wilhelm-research.com

Wilhelm Imaging Research report on 'the stability and preservation of traditional and digital colour photographs,' testing the longevity of photo prints. Manufacturers such as HP and Canon submit their printers to Wilhelm who will perform tests to find out how long the photos will last. Much of this data is online; if you want to buy a printer check it out. **HB**

Samsonite

Serve and protect

Samsonite's new range of camera bags combine style, substance and high-performance protection

Not too many photographers head out in the rain to create masterpieces, but plenty have been caught in it by surprise. Having the right protection for your camera on these occasions is essential, as water and electronics rarely meet on good terms. Samsonite, the best-known luggage brand in the world, has introduced a range of high-quality bags that will protect your equipment not only from the knocks and scrapes of everyday photographic life, but also from the unexpected downpour.

POSH PROTECTION

Samonsite Trekking Premium is a collection of 13 bags and pouches designed with equal measures of protection, security and style in mind. Made in lightweight but ballistic quality black Polytex nylon with leather-like Polyhide to stiffen the front flaps, each bag and pouch combines good looks with a tough, durable exterior. The base of the bags and pouches is covered with a rubber type Polyester DTY to shield against damp grass and wet pavements.

COME RAIN OR SHINE

Each model in the range has an ingeniously concealed rain cover that tucks neatly away in a body pocket on the rear of the bag. In just moments this plastic-coated cover can be pulled out and stretched over the entire bag. Elastic sewn into the edges of the hood ensure a tight and secure fit. These hoods protect your kit from rain, but work just as well against dust and sand in windy conditions.

WARM INSIDE

While nature does its worst outside, the compartments of the Samsonite Trekking Premium bags provide a cosy respite for cameras, lenses, media cards and batteries. Costly, delicate equipment requires a high level of comfort to keep it in peak condition. The soft walls of the interiors of the bags prevents scratching and preserves the exterior finish of your camera, while adjustable dividers allow made-to-measure snugness. Additional compartments and pockets are ideal for spares, films, filters, cables and mini-tripods. Even the most fragile items will be safe, as padding is thick, and fasteners and zips are secure.

SAFE AND STREAMLINED

It looks as though these bags open from the front as other bags do, but that main flap just covers a large storage pocket. The opening to the main compartment of each of the Samonsite Trekking Premium bags is right next to you on the rear.

This positioning makes it very difficult for anyone else to get into the bag when you are carrying it, and makes it easy for you to get your camera out in a hurry. These models open away from the body allowing unrestricted access at a moment's notice.

WIN!

1 of 15 Samsonite camera bags!

We've got 15 Samsonite Trekking Premium bags up for grabs. To be in with a chance of winning, just visit:

www.whatdigitalcamera.com

or fill out the entry form and return it to:

What Digital Camera/Samsonite competiton, IPC Media, Room 0417, King's Reach Tower, Stamford St, London SE1 9LS

TO WEAR OR TO CARRY?

Bags get carried in different ways depending on what we are doing. When we are walking, standing or travelling, transporting our equipment has to be convenient and comfortable.

Fortunately the Samsonite Trekking Premium bags are not just designed for trekking, as each has both a conventional shoulder strap and dual belt hooks on the rear. You need a bag secured to your side so it doesn't swing around when you are on the move. Wearing a bag on your shoulder makes it easier to put down as well as to carry heavier kit.

As a third option the Samsonite Trekking Premium bags have a small handle on top of the main compartment for simply carrying in your hand – especially good for travelling.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE RICH

Remarkably,the Samsonite Trekking Premium bags do not command a premium price. With the top-end bag costing around £40, and pouches starting at only £10, you can treat yourself any time, or make a gift to someone else. ■

For more information on any of these products, please contact Hama on

0845 230 4262

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA

Samsonite®

Closing date for this competition is 2 December 2005. This competition is open to residents of the UK only. The first 15 correct entries chosen at random will win. One entry per person. Entrants must be aged 18 or over. Employees of IPC Media, Time Warner and Samsonite may not enter. Samsonite reserves the right to offer a similar prize of equal or greater value if the stated prizes are unavailable. The judge's decision is final and no correspondence may be entered into.

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____

_____ **Postcode:** _____

Tel: _____

If you would like to receive e-mails from What Digital Camera containing news, special offers and product and service information and take part in research, please write your e-mail address below.

Email:

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CANON EOS 5D

quick view

PRICE £2500

- SENSOR 13.3/12.8MP effective
- SHUTTER SPEED 30-1/8000 & B
- ISO 100-1600
- EXP MODES P, A, S, M
- FLASH PC socket, hotshoe
- VIEWFINDER/MONITOR opt/2.5"LCD
- OTHER CF I/II, M, USB 2.0, sRGB and Adobe colour space, PictureStyle
- POWER Lithium-ion
- DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 152x113x75mm/810g

13 mega pixels

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Living it LARGE

Boasting a full-frame sensor, Canon's EOS 5D happily sits between the EOS 1DS and the 20D, in terms of specification. Jamie Harrison can't wait to check it out

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

Top: Low light and horrible outdoor tungsten lamps proved no problem, even at ISO 1600

Above: Another low-light shot at ISO 800 shows very little image noise

Right: A JPEG image showing just how sharp the images from the 5D are

Canon EOS 5D

Yes, you saw it right in the headline, the new Canon EOS 5D has 13million pixels spread out in a lovely rectangular grid in a full-frame sensor. For those who don't know, full frame is digi-speak for an imaging area the same size as a frame of 35mm film, or 24x36mm. For a time, this was the holy grail for digital SLRs, with only a handful of cameras in the past three years achieving it. Canon was one of that handful, with the 1DS, while Kodak and, oddly, Contax, being the only other operators in the field. Sadly, Canon is the only company now producing full-frame cameras, and this is the latest one.

Other cameras with this sized sensor have been aimed squarely at the professional, or very rich enthusiast, and have commanded a high price tag. The EOS 5D differs because Canon is aiming it at the enthusiast – although again, the fairly well-heeled enthusiast.

SPECIFICATION

To be truly accurate, this sensor is not completely full frame. In fact it's 35.8x23.9mm, if you want to split hairs. If you really want to be pedantic, you could even say that the full-frame sensor is a bit of a misnomer anyway – a 35mm frame size is a more accurate term, as film formats have always been of different sizes. But I digress. More to the point is that the image area offers a 3:2 imaging ratio, the same as 35mm, and will have a negligible effect on the focal length of lenses.

The sensor is a CMOS type, which Canon has long promoted and had much success with. The total pixel count of 13.3 million drops down to 12.8 million effective pixels, after you subtract the outlying black pixels used to set the sensor's exposure parameters. The sensor also uses an RGB primary colour filter, and a three-layer low-pass filter to reduce aliasing and moiré effects.

What's also interesting about the sensor, theoretically at least, is the pixel pitch of the sensor. As it's a larger sensor than is usually found in the majority of DSLRs, the size, or pixel pitch, of the individual sensor is larger. This means the less should display less noise and have a greater dynamic range from current offerings using the APS-C sized chip.

Canon has also developed a new system of image processing for the camera. Essentially an advanced form of scene modes, Picture Style allows you to set processing profiles within the camera.

For example, within the camera menu already are a set of five options – Standard, Portrait, Landscape, Neutral, Faithful and Monochrome. These parameters apply digital filters to provide

>>

see more on the web

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front

The mount on the 5D is compatible with Canon EF-lenses, providing a 1.0x multiplication factor. Canon EF-S lenses cannot be used on the camera

top

The top of the camera is strikingly similar to the 20D.The LCD displays info about the camera settings

side

The 5D is constructed from magnesium alloy and plastic. The CompactFlash or Microdrive fit under a door on the side

up against

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NIKON D2X
£3000

CANON EOS 1D MK II
£3050

FUJIFILM S3PRO
£1200

buying guide

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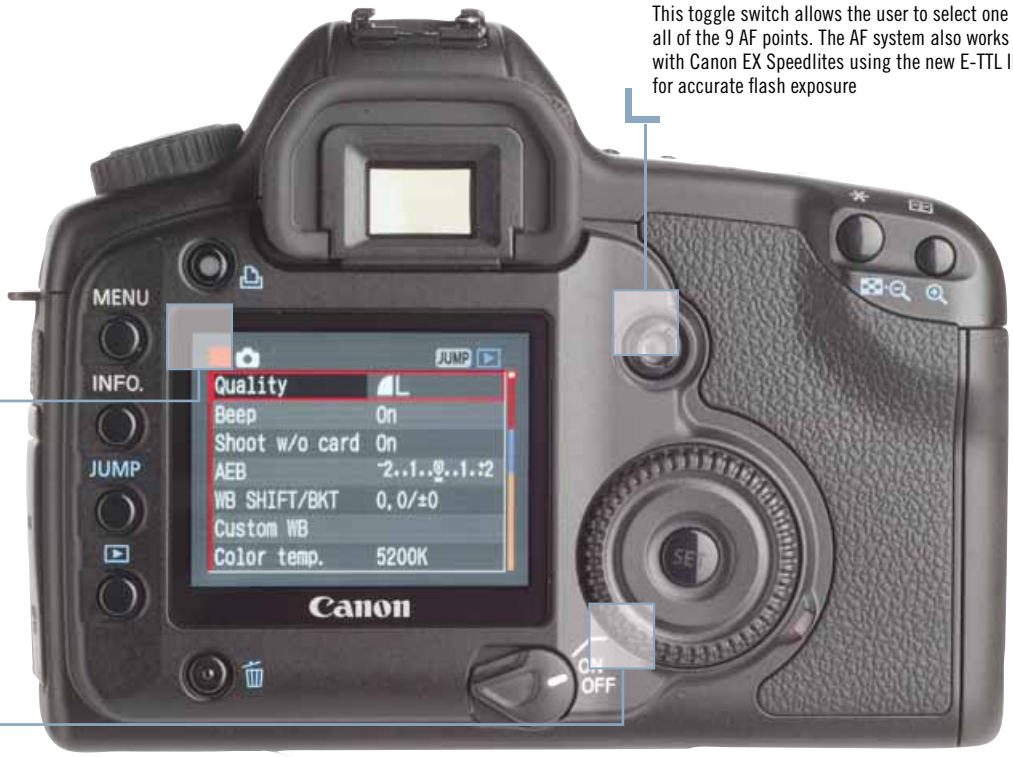
Canon eos 5D



LCD
The 2.5inch LCD is the largest yet on a Canon camera showing plenty of image detail, especially when used with the magnify tool for sharpness checks. The menu is colour coded and follows previous Canon designs.
It's in here you'll find the new Picture Style function

SCROLL WHEEL
Instead of a button cluster, the Canon uses a scroll wheel to navigate the menus and pictures (in review mode).
When the power button is switched to the dial indicator, the EV compensation is activated

AF POINT SELECTION
This toggle switch allows the user to select one or all of the 9 AF points. The AF system also works with Canon EX Speedlites using the new E-TTL II for accurate flash exposure

Lenses

Due to the 35mm-sized sensor, Canon EF lenses on the 5D have no focal length shift, so a 50mm lens displays the same field of view as it would on a film camera

the best results for those subjects.

The Standard profile offers crisp and vivid colours, suited to the majority of users' tastes. Portrait offers a softer texture and better skin tones. Landscape enhances important natural colours such as skies and greens. Neutral is a slight flat, subdued look, and is better suited for work that will be post processed, while Faithful remains true to the colours and tones. Monochrome speaks for itself, with a slight boost in image sharpness as well.

There are also three custom options available, to which you can add your own parameters, like colour or contrast; or download custom versions from the Canon website. These versions at present include Nostalgia, giving a flat faded look; Clear, which helps to reduce the effect of ultra violet light and increase sharpness; and Twilight, which adds a warm tint to images.

The good thing about the Picture Style is that it can work with RAW images, much like White Balance. The filters can be downloaded directly to the camera, by transferring or added to files on the PC using the latest version of Canon Digital Photo Professional software. Incidentally Picture Style is backwards compatible and can be used with RAW files from any Canon SLR since the EOS D30, although the in-camera option isn't available on the older cameras.

The idea isn't especially new; scene modes work in much

It boasts several options that push it into the semi-pro or even pro bracket

the same way, though with more automated exposure functions. And the Kodak Pro SLR had a similar system, though limited to Portrait and Product 'looks', primarily for studio photography.

While the Picture Style system may offer a personalisation of colour, tone and so on, the camera still has a more standard approach to profiles, with Adobe RGB and sRGB colour spaces available. For standard use, sRGB will suit most of your needs; but for better colour and for times when you will be performing more processing, then AdobeRGB is the way to go, with its wider colour gamut.

The camera includes a noise-reduction system, primarily for longer exposures. Like other such systems, it seems to make the camera add a blur over the image to hide the noise rather than remove it, so images look less sharp than they would behind it. A plethora of software-based noise-reduction systems is available, including within the Photoshop CS2 RAW processor, and this may be a better option to use because it reduces the colour artefacts rather than blurs them.

As for White Balance, the EOS 5D has a multitude of options. As well as a set of presets and auto WB, all of which are pretty darned good, there is also the option of setting the colour temperature, as well as a WB bracketing option.

Unlike the lower-priced cameras, the EOS 5D boasts several options that push it into the semi-pro bracket, or even (at the price) professional bracket. These include little touches such as interchangeable focusing screens, of which the Canon has two. Obviously the back catalogue of lenses, flash guns and so on are also included. The 5D has no built-in flash, so a Canon-compatible flash needs to be added to your shopping list, but at least the camera has a PC sync socket for external flash, so the camera can easily be used in the studio.

The EOS 5D may be described as an EOS 1DS-lite, or a ramped-up 20D, sitting perfectly between the two cameras in terms of specification and size. It's certainly a chunky monkey, heavier than the 20D, but weighs in at less than a kilo (without lens) which is less than the 1DS series, as well as being physically smaller. What impresses is that Canon has managed to fit the large sensor into such a

image quality

I had great expectations of this camera, from past experience of the 20D and 1D series. Was I disappointed? Well, it's not perfect. The problem with full-frame cameras is that you're more likely to use older lenses, and unless you've spent on quality optics in the first place, image quality will suffer in comparison to film, especially at the edges.

Luckily I used good lenses with this camera, and although there is minor purple fringing and some loss of definition, results tended to be first rate – especially RAW images. JPEGs will always show some image degradation, though the vast majority of people wouldn't notice. In RAW however, I made some fantastic prints up to A3 with little trouble.

I can't say I'm a massive fan of the Picture Style system, especially using the Canon defined profiles, but I can see the benefit of the custom profiles. Unfortunately a magazine review doesn't allow the time to play with this in-depth, but I look forward to further investigation. Nevertheless, it does work, I just don't like the colour parameters it uses. This is personal, and I'm sure others will find a huge benefit from it.

As far as the all-important noise issue goes, there is, alas, noise at ISO 800 to 1600, but it's extremely well controlled. You certainly won't notice it on a 10x8" print. Even better, I would say the noise that is there is less noticeable than the grain visible on a similarly rated film, which is the ultimate aim of digital anyway – better than film.

Image Quality

Vignetting is always a worry when using 35mm sized sensors and wideangle lenses. This is because the obtuse angle of the light as it reaches the extreme corners of the frame can cause a phenomenon called pixel shading. Unlike a flat piece of film, a sensor has an uneven, 'bumpy' surface. If the angle of light is not straight, those pixels may receive less of the light, resulting in dark corners and information loss. The 5D shows very, very little sign of any problem in general photography.

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA

MODE DIAL
The dial offers the standard MASP and auto configuration plus a position for bulb (or timed exposures). Custom modes can also be set
FRONT COMMAND DIAL
This is used to change exposure settings and also allows changes of White Balance, ISO and so forth, when used with the corresponding buttons
50mm
AF-WB DRIVE-ISO

small space, especially when you consider the size of the 1DS and 1DS MkII, which are seriously big cameras. The EOS 5D, by comparison, is a midget.

Of course, the 1D series of cameras comes close, but doesn't have a full-frame sensor, an 8MP sensor, and has a higher price tag to match the increased build quality and weatherproofing. That camera also offers more speed than the 5D, at 8fps. The 5D still offers a respectable 3fps over 60 frames in JPEG mode, which is all the more remarkable when you think about the size of file that needs to processed and pushed through the pipeline. The initial RAW file is between 10 and 14MB, while a compressed JPEG is around 5MB. The processing power and memory buffer size needed to process three of those a second 60 times, without a break is quite impressive, especially given the price.

'In terms of performance and image quality, there's not much that this camera can't do'

In regards to the build quality of the camera, the magnesium alloy body may not be up to the rigours of the Iraqi desert, but is tough enough to take the knocks that everyday life can throw at it. It has a comforting weight and balance that makes you feel you have a tough, precision tool in your hand. The grip feels secure, and the buttons and controls on the camera are far from flimsy to the touch.

The camera controls are closer to that of the 20D too, better serving the needs of the advanced enthusiast, or semi-pro, than the complicated EOS 1D cameras do. This makes the camera an attractive choice to those who wish to upgrade from a 20D or 10D. The camera will feel natural and intuitive. New Canon users, of course, should still find the control of the camera relatively easy because most of the photographic controls follow the traditional layout.

Of course, new and experienced users both will need to experiment with some of the newer features such as the Picture Style modes and the broader range of digital control cameras such as this can offer.

There are some handling issues to overcome, though. For a start there's Canon's continued insistence of putting the depth-of-field preview in the wrong place. This is placed on the front of the camera, in exactly the wrong position for the left hand to reach it, especially when using a long telephoto lens, which is usually the kind of lens that needs depth of field preview. If you try to reach it, you're bound to move the camera and lose your composition, so it becomes useless. Unless you're using a tripod, of course. I've complained about this several times in the past and will continue to do so until it's corrected, which it probably won't be – Canon has used the same system for years and I don't really see it affecting camera sales too much.

Canon also doesn't make the Exposure Compensation system immediately obvious. Where is it and how do you use it? In fact, a further position on the power switch transforms the rotary dial on the back of the camera (usually used for menu or playback navigation) into the exposure compensation dial. I'm not fond of this system at all, and would much prefer a '±' button located near the right thumb position, and use the front or rear command dial to make the change. Regular users will get used to this, but I defy a newcomer or occasional user to find or remember this function. Again it's not a major problem, and is obviously not putting people off; I just don't like the system.

VERDICT

This is a superb camera, with only minor niggles, mainly ones that can be levelled at any Canon camera. That is the depth of field in the wrong place and a horrible EV system. Let's face it: they're unlikely to dissuade people from investing. In terms of performance and image quality, there's not much this camera can't do and it should win many fans.

Images are good and, more important, big, allowing large prints to made, plenty of detail to be captured and will satisfy publishers, stock libraries and many other potential clients. On the professional side, I can see this being popular with wedding, landscape, fine art photographers and others who may not always have £6000 to invest in a 1DS.

For semi pros and enthusiasts, however, that investment is still substantial at £2500 and this isn't a mainstream camera. But it does show us where cameras are going to be in the not-too-distant future. Canon leads the way in consumer DSLRs, first with the EOS D30 and latterly the 8MP 350D. Others have followed since but Canon continues to advance faster and often better. If Canon can, why can't anyone else? WDC

specifications

MANUFACTURER:	Canon
MODEL:	EOS 5D
PRICE:	£2500
CCD:	35.8x23.9mm CMOS 12.8 MP effective/13.3MP total
MAX PRINT SIZE:	21.84x14.56-inch at 200dpi
LENS:	Canon EF
SHUTTER SPEEDS:	30-1/8000 sec, Bulb
ISO:	100-1600
EXP MODES:	A, AP, M, P, SP, Custom
FLASH:	Hot shoe, PC sync
DRIVE MODES:	Single, continuous 3fps for 60 Jpegs/17 RAW
METER:	Evaluative, partial, spot, centre-weighted
WHITE BALANCE:	A, 6 preset, custom, colour temperature, bracketing
FOCUS:	9-point AF: One shot, AI Servo, AI Focus, M
VIEWFINDER:	Pentaprism 96% coverage
MONITOR:	2.5-inch TFT LCD, 230,000 pixels
CONNECTION:	USB 2.0, A/V
REC FORMAT:	Jpeg, RAW
FILE TYPE:	EXIF 2.21, DPOF, DCF
VIDEO OUTPUT:	Pal, NTSC
POWER:	Lithium-ion
STORAGE:	CF I/II, M,
OTHER:	Adobe RGB, sRGB, PictBridge,
DIMENSIONS:	152x113x75mm
WEIGHT:	810g

scores

PROS: Well built, good features, speed of use, images

CONS: Some fiddly controls, very faint edge fringing

features	19
ease of use	18
image quality	19
design	17
value	18

91%

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FUJIFILM FINEPIX S9500

quick view

PRICE £500

- **CCD** 9.2MP Total, 9MP effective
- **LENS** 28-300mm (equivalent) f/2.8-4.9
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 1/4-1/4000sec
- **ISO** 80-1600
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, M,A,S,P+5 Scene, Mov
- **FLASH** Built-in, Hotshoe
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** EVF/ 1.8" 235,000 pixel LCD
- **OTHER** xD and CF I & II slots
- **POWER** 4x AA
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 128 x 93 x 129mm/645g

top

The top plate is reminiscent of an SLR, with mode dial and deep grip. There's also a hotshoe for external flash units

front

The 28-300mm lens is the dominant feature on the front

side

Ports covering USB and remote cable socket can be seen. A focus mode switch is also here

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PANASONIC FZ30
£550

NIKON 8800
£520

CANON PRO 1
£440

buying guide

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9 mega pixels

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

Fujifilm Finepix S9500

The S9500 boasts a 9MP sensor, the first of another breed of Fujifilm's SuperCCDs. That's just for starters, finds **Jamie Harrison**

So far as bridge cameras go, Fujifilm has a long tradition stretching right back to the popular Finepix 4900 back in 2000. That camera has been transformed several times, through the S602, to the S7000 and now the S9500. All of these cameras have shared the same basic shape and idea: high resolution and long lens. Of course, the 2MP and 3MP Super CCDs of the earliest cameras were considered high resolution in the early part of the decade, but they seem laughable now. What will we think of the 9MP sensor of the FinePix S9500 in the next couple of years?

That 9MP sensor is one of the important features of the camera, as this is the first of another breed of Fujifilm's SuperCCDs. It doesn't have any interpolation features found in previous chips, notably the ones in the aforementioned cameras. Of course, I doubt if many people would really need 18MP and the cost for the processor and buffer memory would probably raise the price of the S9500 out of its target market.

So what do we get from 9MP of raw imaging power? A maximum print size of 17x 13 inches (at 200dpi) and the promise of sharper, more detailed prints at smaller sizes. But that's not all that the Fujifilm S9500 offers.

Following on from cameras such as the F10 (see how it works?) Fujifilm has incorporated its Real Photo Technology into the S9500. Image noise has long been a problem with smaller-sized sensors, limiting the sensitivity to low light. Currently most cameras only offer a maximum sensitivity of ISO 400. This is due in part to the light-gathering power of the individual photosite, and as people demand ever smaller cameras and higher resolution, the silicon chip is getting smaller, while the amount of pixels on that chip are increasing.

This means that ever smaller pixels are being crowded onto the sensor, with smaller well depths. The amplification of the signal therefore has to be turned up in lower light and hey presto, noise occurs. This isn't the only factor – there are other reasons too: heat, or signal leakage as it travels through the pipeline, and many more.

Fujifilm's sensor is slightly larger than most at 1/1.6inch, and the hexagonal array of the photosites also increases the pixel's surface area, and so its light-gathering power. Of course, there is also a certain amount of mathematical jiggery-pokery,

EVF
The electronic viewfinder is quite high resolution but suffers from a constant flicker, which can be annoying
FUNCTION BUTTON
The 'f' button accesses useful, oft-used functions such as image quality, white balance and ISO. Oddly RAW mode is not here, but it should be
LCD
The LCD is a flip-out type offering overhead and low shooting but no rotation
SELF-TIMER
FinePix

and I'm sure the processing algorithms that Fujifilm uses have a say in the final outcome.

Pardon? What's the outcome? Well, the S9500 offers a much greater sensitivity than any of its rivals do, except the SLRs. To be precise, it offers ISO 80-1600. This means the camera can be used in lower light than other cameras – and, because faster shutter speeds can be used as a result, camera shake as well as subject movement can be halted at capture.

In other respects the camera is pretty well specified. The lens covers a versatile range – the equivalent of a useful 28mm at the wide end to 300mm – without being too big. It uses a manual zoom control, with a ring around the edge of the lens, which has a nicely ridged grip. This allows for accurate zooming to the place you want to go. Electronic zooms, on the other hand, tend to be stepped, so they don't allow the sort of precision offered by the S9500. The zoom ring is also joined by a manual focus ring, again offering precise and natural control in manual mode.

'There is not a massive difference between ISO 400 and ISO 1600 and, I have to say, that is hugely impressive'

However, the resolution of the electronic viewfinder (EVF) hinders really precise focusing, so there's a lack of detail. This is even worse in magnify mode, which increases the size of the central portion of the image area but, being a digital zoom function, loses even more resolution and thus more detail. This practically makes manual focus a contradiction in terms, because there's not enough detail to focus on! The EVF is somewhat problematic in general use too, thanks to a rather severe flicker which can be quite disturbing; I doubt it would cause an epileptic fit, but it is annoying.

Nevertheless, the AF system is somewhat better, and hits the mark pretty much every time. There's a choice of multi, spot and wide area focusing, with single and continuous focus options included. Metering covers similar options, »

image quality

Does 9MP give you any more quality? Well the S9500 can certainly do a good job on smaller prints, but if you go the whole hog and print at A3 size, there is a lack of detail, especially in the shadow areas. On the plus side though, the camera does a great job of controlling noise: there's not a massive difference between ISO 400 and 1600, and I have to say, that really is impressive. Hugely impressive.

Colour is good too, in general, though I prefer the chrome look to the standard. This colour setting is supposed to replicate slide film, such as Velvia or Provia. As with the Fuji S3 Pro, I would like to see this refined further, so we can actually have a true Fujifilm look to the images – a Velvia setting, a Provia setting, an Astia setting and so on.

While the images look nice and bright, I'd hazard to say that they are ever so slightly over exposed. In addition, the multi metering isn't as accurate as some other cameras are, so you need to use exposure compensation a little more than you would with some competitors, especially for low-key subjects.

Finally, the spectre of fringing raises its ugly purple head on occasion but only faintly, and in extreme contrast conditions.

see more on the web

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www.whatdigitalcamera.com

specifications

MANUFACTURER:	Fujifilm
MODEL:	Finepix S9500
PRICE:	£500
CCD:	1/1.6" 9.3 MP Total/ 9 MP eff/ Super CCD
MAX PRINT SIZE:	17x13inches@200ppi
LENS:	6.2-66.7mm (28-300mm equivalent) f/2.4-4.9
SHUTTER SPEEDS:	1/4-1/4000sec
ISO:	Auto, plus 80-1600
EXPOSURE MODES:	M,A,S,P, Auto+5 scene modes, Mov
FLASH:	Built-in, dedicated hotshoe
DRIVE MODES:	S,C
METERING:	Multi-area, centre-weighted and spot
WHITE BALANCE:	Auto plus 6 presets , manual , custom
FOCUS:	Centre, multi area AF
VIEWFINDER:	EVF
MONITOR:	1.8" 118,000" TFT LCD
CONNECTION:	USB 2.0 High speed
REC FORMAT:	RAW, JPEG
FILE TYPE:	Exif 2.2
VIDEO OUTPUT:	NTSC, PAL, DPOF, DCR
POWER:	4X AA
STORAGE:	xD and CF slots
DIMENSIONS:	128 x 93 x 129mm
WEIGHT :	645g

scores

PROS: Low noise, good features

CONS: Some quirky handling, expensive

features	18
ease of use	17
image quality	17
design	17
value	17

86%

LENS
The built-in lens is a sharp performer with a 35mm equivalent focal length of 28-300mm. Maximum aperture at the wide end is an impressive f/2.8, but this drops to f/4.9 at tele, which is okay but not great
POWER
The power button offers three positions: on, record mode and review mode
MODE DIAL
As well as the standard MASP modes, the S9500 also offers scene, movie and auto modes
Finepix
28-300mm
S9500

with multi-segment, spot and centre-weighted and up to ±2EV compensation. Exposure options are fairly standard: there's Manual, Aperture Priority, Shutter Priority and Program, as well as Auto and a collection of five scene modes and card-dependent unlimited talking picture mode, or movie as the young folks call it now.

Talking of cards, did I mention that the S9500 swings both ways, and accepts both xD Picture Card and Compact Flash Types I and II. There is no option to move images between the cards though or to save a JPEG on one and RAW on the other, which would be nice, but I imagine that the processor and buffer have enough to do to handle the files, let alone create two files and sort out the final destinations. That would be asking too much.

'RAW recording is a particular pain to use, because it's so hard to find'

One consideration to bear in mind in RAW recording is, as I previously alluded, the camera's inability to shoot two simultaneous file formats. Other manufacturers do this, but Fujifilm has so far held off. RAW recording is a particular pain, because the option is so hard to find. I'll give you a clue: Go into the Finepix menu, which is marked as an F on the back of the camera, and look for image size. When you don't find it, go into the menu, you're getting warmer. Go to the set-up menu (warmer), screen two (ooh.. ooh.. boiling) and it's the second option. That's twelve keystrokes to turn RAW on. Now if you're out on a nice family day, shooting JPEGs and see something of particular photographic interest, you want to switch to RAW. Twelve button presses later, it's practically midnight and you realise your family have left and gone home, while you've missed the picture that could have sold on greeting cards around the world and earned a fortune for perpetuity. Okay I exaggerate a little; your family would probably wait in the car for you, but you get the idea. It's a stupid place to put it.

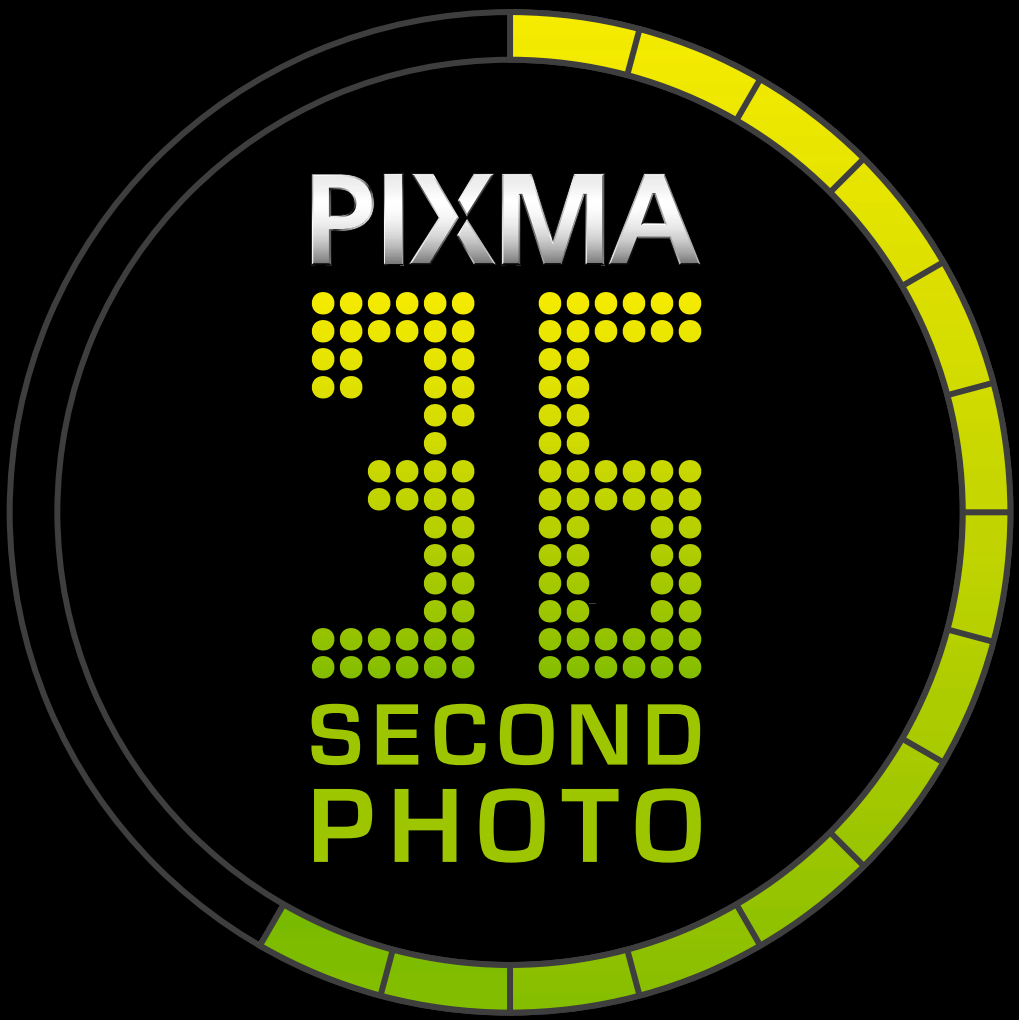
After I'd got over this baffling quirk, I realised that, actually, there's still more to this camera to like. The Finepix menu, marked as an F, has some useful functions, and can be reached quickly, wherein lie such gems as the ISO and Chroma settings, which give you a choice of three image looks: Standard, Chrome and Monochrome. Also in here are the image size options. An option you're probably going to use less than RAW, but maybe I'm just touchy about this.

Fujifilm, to be honest, has got the balance about right on other aspects of camera navigation. External buttons control EV adjustment, drive mode, AE-Lock, flash, metering and autofocus. Everything else is tucked away in safely in the menu. The essentials are there, the occasionals are put away; such should be the world.

VERDICT

There's a lot to like about the Fujifilm Finepix S9500, not least the overall feel of the camera. I have certain problems with the images, but with experience or knowledge aforethought, they can be overcome. Importantly though, the lack of noise in images in stunning. The tonality of the images follows that of the S3 Pro, at a far lower price.

The criticisms I have are more to do with quirks rather than serious issues, but they are criticisms nevertheless. Overall though, it's not half bad. WDC


PIXMA
15
SECOND
PHOTO

KODAK EASYSHARE Z700

quick view

PRICE £179

- **SENSOR** 1/2.5in 4.1MP CCD
- **LENS** 35–175 mm equiv. f/2.8-4.8
- **SHUTTER SPEEDS** 8–1/1000sec
- **SHOOTING MODES** P, A, S, sport, landscape, close-up plus 13 scene
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Optical/ 1.6in
- **FLASH** Modes: auto, redeye reduction, fill-in, off
- **GUIDE NUMBER** 9.5m
- **POWER** 2CR-V3, 2xAA
- **OTHER** Storage SD, PictBridge, ±2.0 EV,
- **DIMENSIONS/ WEIGHT** 94 x 72 x 54.5mm/ 219 g

scores

PROS: Great specification, at a great price

CONS: A bit lethargic, slightly blocky images

features	18
ease of use	15
image quality	15
design	15
value	19

82%

4 mega pixels

Kodak Easyshare Z700

Kodak's 4MP model comes under **Joël Lacey**'s scrutiny

This 4MP model is very comprehensively specified for the price. Its 5x optical zoom (25-175mm f/2.8-4.8) is complemented by a TTL Centre spot or multi-point autofocusing system. It has a 10cm minimum focusing distance and MPEG 4 video (640x480 at 13fps) mode as well.

As for exposure modes, Program, Aperture priority, Shutter priority, Auto, Sports, Portrait and Macro modes are on the dial, plus you get an extra 15 scene modes. Shutter speeds are 8-1/1600sec, and there are four metering patterns and 16Mb of internal memory to complement the SD or MMC card. It's powered by two AA cells of a CRV3 lithium cell. Finally on the spec side, it's compatible with the Easyshare Printer Dock 3 so you can print from the camera while recharging as well as downloading images to your PC.

On the handling side, the optical finder is not a TTL one but does give a clear bright view. This model's 1.6in monitor looks a little small compared with many on the market. The Z700 is not the speediest camera in the world to focus but does so with some assurance. In terms of image quality and performance it's not quite on a par with its specification, but then that would be impressive for a sub-£200 model.

VERDICT

Very nearly delivers on its magnificent specification; very nearly, but not quite. **WDC**

CANON IXUS iZOOM

quick view

PRICE £319

- **CCD** 1/2.5-inch 5.5MP CCD, 5.0 MP effective
- **LENS** 6.3-14.9mm f/3.2-5.4 (38-90 mm 35mm equ)
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 15-1/1600 sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** A, "manual", 6 scene modes
- **ISO** Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400
- **FLASH** Built in 0.3-2m
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** None / 1.8in, 118,000 pixels
- **OTHER** SD/MMC
- **POWER** Li-ion cell
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 96 x 45 x 24mm / 105g

scores

PROS: Compact size, design, ease of use modes, battery life

CONS: Limited overrides, limited zoom range

features	15
ease of use	17
image quality	15
design	17
value	15

79%

5 mega pixels

Canon IXUS i Zoom

Joël Lacey tests Canon's latest 5MP necklace camera

Canon has been at the forefront of cute camera design since the original APS film Ixus came out nine years ago. Canon has also forged a path in terms of getting the most out of its sensors. The Digital Ixus i has been updated by giving it a zoom instead of a fixed-focal-length lens.

The predictably named Digital Ixus i Zoom has a 38-90mm lens, 5MP resolution and a bijou range of overrides. Metering can be changed between evaluative, centre-weighted and spot in 'manual' mode, which is the same as auto mode except that in the latter only the file size can be changed. White balance, self timer, ISO and exposure compensation can only be altered in the manual mode. To change the focusing range from its minimum of 30cm you need to switch to macro mode (one of six scene modes) but macro only gets you closer at the telephoto end, where the minimum focusing distance is 10cm. In many ways this is a much more sensible position on the zoom range to put a macro focusing position, but it's not where most people would look. The camera is about the size of a 10 pack of fags and the LCD may be small (1.8inch) but it's a high-definition one.

The camera produces nicely exposed, generally excellently focused images, and image processing is well handled. As with all tiny cameras, it's best, if the light permits, to set the ISO to 50 rather than let auto take care of it, as noise levels creep up exponentially with the ISO setting. It comes in Black, Cranberry and Sahara (bronze).

VERDICT

An effective if not ground-breaking performance. **WDC**

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PANASONIC LUMIX DMC-FX9

quick view

PRICE £350

- **CCD** 1/2.5" 6MP effect/6.37 Total
- **LENS** 35– 105mm f2.8-5.0
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 8– 1/2000 sec
- **ISO** A, 80, 100,200, 400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, P, 14 scene
- **FLASH** 0.3m – 4m (W) 0.3-2.2 (T)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** n/a/ 2.5-inch TFT 207,000 pixels
- **OTHER** SD, 30fps movie
- **POWER** Lithium-ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 94.1 x 50.5 x 24.2mm/155g (total)

6 mega pixels

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

scores

PROS: LCD, anti-shake

CONS: Limited space around back

features	17
ease of use	18
image quality	17
design	17
value	17

86%

Panasonic DMC-FX9

Hannah Bouckley tests an update to an old favourite

The DMC-FX9 looks similar to its predecessor, the FX8. The main difference is the 6MP resolution instead of 5MP, producing pictures good enough for 14x11in prints at 200dpi.

Additionally the resolution of the 2.5in LCD has been increased from 150,000 to 207,000 pixels. The LCD is a joy, providing a bright, incredibly clear view, making it easy to compose a photograph.

Performance times are impressive: there is little evidence of shutter lag and start-up is under 1.5secs. In 6MP mode you can zoom up to 3x optically; the Extra Optical Zoom feature enables you to extend this to 4x if you are happy to shoot 3MP images.

To reduce the effect of blur in low-light conditions the FX9 has a useful optical image stabiliser with two modes: Mode 1 functions continually and Mode 2 is activated when the shutter is depressed. Five selectable autofocus modes include 5-area, 3-area (high speed), 1-area and spot. Adjustments can be made to white balance, exposure compensation, sensitivity; and a slow shutter can be enabled, although there is no control over the aperture.

Images are good, with strong colours, though fringing occurs in high-contrast situations and noise is evident at ISO 200, even more so at ISO 400.

VERDICT

The enhanced LCD ensures that the FX9 is a marked improvement over the FX8. It is a fast compact, producing good quality photos and movies. **WDC**

SAMSUNG DIGIMAX L50

quick view

PRICE £200

- **CCD** 1/2.5" 5MP effect/5.36 Total
- **LENS** 39– 109.2mm f3.2-5.4
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 15– 1/2000 sec
- **ISO** A, 50, 100,200, 400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, P, 11 scene
- **FLASH** 0.2.5m –2.0m (W) / 0.3-1.5m (T)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** n/a/ 2.5-inch TFT 230,000 pixels
- **OTHER** SD, 26MB int, 30fps movie with stabilizer
- **POWER** Lithium-ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 93.3 x 52.1 x 22.3mm/120g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: LCD size, lightweight

CONS: Menu is not very user-friendly

features	17
ease of use	16
image quality	16
design	17
value	18

83%

Samsung Digimax L50

Hannah Bouckley looks at Samsung's 5MP contender

An attractive, lightweight aluminium camera, the L50 sits comfortably in the hand. There is no viewfinder; instead the 2.5in LCD, composed of an impressive 230,000 pixels, dominates the back. The lens (39-102mm equivalent) has a slightly shorter range than some rivals.

Using a central focus point, focusing is satisfactory – if not lightning quick – at wide and telephoto positions. Macro mode produces decent results, focusing a rather disappointing 10cm from the subject.

Start-up is fairly quick; hold down the power button and you can take your first shot in just over 2 secs, and using a Lexar 256MB card we clocked 5MP shot cycle times of around 2.5secs.

There are enough features to keep the casual user happy. You can choose from program and automatic exposure modes or 11 scene modes; and the L50 can capture movies at 30fps and 15fps up to 640x480 pixels using MPEG-4 compression, and a movie stabiliser reduces shake. White balance, ISO, exposure compensation and colour channels can be adjusted on screen in manual mode; and multi and spot metering commands are located in the menu. There is a selection of fun in-camera effects, accessible by hitting the 'E' command, including colour filters, image outlines, some (frankly dubious) photo frames and on-screen composition guides.

VERDICT

The L50 is a nice point and shoot, producing pleasing photographs, though ISO 200 is very noisy. However it is not particularly user-friendly; the abundance of menus meant it took me a while before I felt confident using the camera. **WDC**

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OLYMPUS MJU DIGITAL 600

quick view

PRICE £220

- **CCD** 1/2.5" 6MP effect/6.4MP Total
- **LENS** 35– 105 f3.1-5.2
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 4– 1/1000 sec
- **ISO** A, 100, 200, 400, 800, 1600
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, 23 scene, movie
- **FLASH** 4m (W)/ 2.5m (T) GN 6.5
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** n/a/ 2.5-inch TFT 115,000 pixels
- **OTHER** xD, 8MB internal, 640x480 15fps movies
- **POWER** Lithium-ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 97 x 55 x 26.5mm/140g

6 mega pixels

Olympus Mju Digital 600

Will this suit all levels of user? asks **Hannah Bouckley**

The 6MP mju 600 is the latest addition to Olympus mju range, available in three colours and featuring the trademark weatherproof body equivalent to IEC standard.

Constructed from durable aluminium with an attractive trim, it is lightweight and sits comfortably in the hand. We'll come to the LCD screen in a moment – suffice to say that it has a 2.5in diameter, which coupled with the proliferation of buttons, severely restricts space. There is no clear area for the thumb, which meant occasionally my fingers inadvertently changed the exposure mode. Display, Playback and the Record/Scene mode are located under the optical zoom control. The impressive collection of 25 scene modes includes Behind Glass, Auction and Sunset, while Night Scene and Sports enable you to access slow and high shutter speeds respectively.

The LCD incorporates Olympus BrightCapture Technology designed to ensure visibility in dark conditions. It proved very effective, enabling us to easily compose shots in dim light when conventional LCDs struggle. Despite this, the screen is less impressive in bright conditions, owing to the fairly standard resolution of 115,000 pixels. It's not bad, but without a viewfinder it can be hard to compose shots accurately.

After turning it on, you can start shooting in a respectable two seconds, and shot cycle time is around a second (with focus lock) for 6MP JPEGS taken at optimum quality without flash. The lens has a 35-105mm (35mm equiv) focal length, moving from wide to telephoto in two seconds and 15 stages. Focusing goes as close as 7cm in Super Macro Mode (lens fixed at wideangle), producing decent results.

The iESP focusing system detects and focuses on the object in the frame and is (by and large) accurate and quick. Spot AF focuses on the central area, but there is no manual focus. The mju 600 has six white pre-set white balance options, adjustable exposure compensation and effective ESP and spot metering. Reaching ISO 1600, sensitivity options are impressive, though picture size is limited to 2MP (1600x1200 pixels) at ISO 800 and 1600. Why not make it accessible at all image sizes? ISO levels of 2500 (automatically selected) are available in Available Light Portrait, Candle and Indoors scene modes.

Pictures produced are agreeable, producing colours that are true to life and pleasing skin tones. However, they occasionally lack sharpness and definition and I found camera shake more problematic than normal at telephoto position and in low-light conditions. It struggles sometimes with tricky lighting conditions, occasionally burning out highlights, while purple fringing is evident in high-contrast situations.

VERDICT

The mju 600 is an attractive, well-built proposition for anyone looking for a point and shoot camera. Speed and battery life are all good and, while manual features are limited, there is an impressive selection of scene modes which, coupled with some standout features like the LCD's low-light performance, ultimately impress. WDC

FOUR-WAY CONTROLLER
In Record mode hit the four-way controller to access exposure compensation, flash self-timer and macro; in playback mode use them to scroll through your pictures

DISPLAY BUTTON
Hit the Display button to view image information, a live histogram and composition guides

top

The on/off button is alongside the shutter and strap eyelet

front

The 3x optical zoom is protected by a sliding-lens cover

side

Lift the plastic flap to access DC and USB connections; the DC is available as an additional accessory

up against

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FUJIFILM F10

£230

scores

PROS: LCD in low light, start-up speeds

CONS: Some soft images, LCD in bright sunlight

features	17
ease of use	17
image quality	16
design	17
value	17

84%

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OLYMPUS CAMEDIA SP-500 UZ

quick view

PRICE £300

- **SENSOR** 1/2.5inch CCD (Total 6.37MP, Effective 6.0MP)
- **LENS** 38-380mm f/2.8-3.7
- **SHUTTER SPEEDS** 15-1/1000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** M, A, AP, SP, P, 21 Scene
- **FLASH** 0.3m - 4.5m (W) 1.2m-3.4 T, GN9
- **ISO** Auto, 80, 100, 200, 400
- **MONITOR** EVF 201,600 pixel/ 2.5inch 115,000 pixel TFT
- **OTHER** 320x240 30fps Video,10Mb int, xD
- **POWER** 4x AA
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 105.5x74.5x71mm/285g

6 mega pixels

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

top

Adjacent to the pop-up flash on the top plate of the camera sit the mode dial, AEL, shutter and Power On buttons

front

Investing in an TCON-17 adaptor enables conversion lens to be used with the SP-500 UZ

side

The USB and A/V point is protected by a rubber cover, adjacent to the strap eyelet

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Olympus Camedia SP-500 UZ

Jamie Harrison tests a Superzoom camera that looks like it's a compact

Most Superzoom cameras are quite bulky compared to compact cameras. Some are even approaching the size of an SLR, albeit including a 10x or 12x zoom lens. Olympus, though, has taken a slightly different, although predictably Olympian, route. The new SP-500UZ is small, yet still manages to squeeze an awful lot into its diminutive stature.

Why is this predictably Olympian though? The company has always made a point of producing small but perfectly formed cameras. Look at the original mju cameras, the OM series, the Pen EE half frames. Olympus has always been slightly odd, too. Cameras such as the O product and Ecru displayed a forward-thinking design ethos, while in 1991 Olympus introduced the idea of the bridge camera, halfway between compact and SLR, which has defined the design ethos for most of the modern digital Superzoom. So what does Olympus do now? It designs a superzoom camera that looks more like a traditional compact.

SPECIFICATIONS

The SP-500 is well specified for such a small camera, with an impressive 38-380mm lens and large 2.5in LCD on the back. Like other cameras in the genre, the camera offers much for the enthusiast, including RAW recording and the full set of exposure controls, Program, Aperture priority, Shutter priority, and full Manual. For less experienced photographers or those who prefer the easy life, the SP-500 still allows automatic mode, as well as 21 scene modes.

Technology has also filtered down from the recent C-7070 model, including that camera's impressive Predictive AF system for tracking moving subjects, not to mention the company's IESP metering system, and 143 individual focus points, which can be linked to the spot metering function.

Many cameras of this size have forgone the viewfinder altogether, but Olympus has still managed to maintain an electronic version, with 201,600 pixels that manages to be sharp and detailed, with the added benefit of electronic readouts such as live his-

EVF
The SP-500 uses an electronic viewfinder which is reasonably clear and bright and shows all of the scene via a video feed from the CCD

LCD
The 2.5inch LCD monitor is a very useful size, and is bright and clear. The menu follows Olympus' usual rotary style front page, with nested sub menus

image quality

Exposure is one area I've never been able to criticise Olympus for: the company knows how to meter. Time after time despite the varying September conditions, the SP-500 produced perfectly exposed pictures. Image sharpness is a good point too, and despite worries that the lens could be overstretching itself, I was impressed with the results. At times, images look a tad over sharpened, especially JPEGs, though not with RAW. There's also the odd case of purple fringing, especially in high contrast conditions. Like pretty much every camera we test with small sensors, image noise is a problem, though lower ISO settings prove to be well controlled. Colour is good, though a little too saturated for my taste, and an Adobe RGB option would have been nice.

see more on the web

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togram and AF/metering frames.

In many respects this is a camera that people have been crying out for. The price is good, at £300; the resolution at 6MP allows for reasonable A4 prints;

'In many respects this is a camera that people have been crying out for'

it's got plenty of photographic control and it easily fits into a pocket. Plus it's got that long lens. But it's not perfect.

There has to be compromises to fit the price and the plastic body isn't as tough as I'd like. It's not bad, but it isn't the same as last year's metal-bodied C-770 and C-765 cameras. It's also just a little bit bland to look at, and lacks the style of some other cameras at that price.

However the traditional looks may well work as an advantage, particularly in appealing to first-time digital buyers transferring from film, or for those who don't want a style statement but a good, functional camera… and there are plenty of those people about.

VERDICT
The SP-500 is competent and a truly useful camera. It acts like a compact, with the features of a superzoom, and is the ideal camera to chuck in your bag when you don't want to carry an SLR or other bigger camera. You won't be able to use it as a complete alternative to an SLR, but it's not a bad back up. Similarly at the price, if you want to try out digital and all it has to offer then you could do worse, while students could benefit from its budget price and traditional controls. I really like it. **WDC**

specifications

MANUFACTURER:	Olympus
MODEL:	SP-500 Ultra Zoom
PRICE:	£300
CCD:	1/2.5-inch 6.0MP eff/6.37MP total
MAX PRINT SIZE:	14.08 x 10.56-inch at 200dpi
LENS:	6.3 - 63mm f2.8-3.7 (35mm equ 38-380mm)
SHUTTER SPEEDS:	15-1/1000sec
ISO:	Auto, 80, 100, 200, 400
EXP MODES:	Auto, AP, M, P, SP, 21 scene modes
FLASH:	GN9
DRIVE MODES:	Single, burst, high-speed burst
METER:	Digital ESP , spot, centre-weighted
WHITE BALANCE:	A, 7preset, custom
FOCUS:	Spot, iESP autofocus, Predictive AF, AF selectable from 143 points, Manual
VIEWFINDER:	Electronic 201,600 pixels
MONITOR:	2.5-inch TFT LCD, 115,000 pixels
CONNECTION:	USB 2.0, DC
REC FORMAT:	Jpeg, RAW, QuickTime Motion Jpeg
FILE TYPE:	Pictbridge, Pictbridge EasyPrint, Print Image Matching III, Exif 2.21, DPS and DPOF support
VIDEO OUTPUT:	Pal
POWER:	4xAA
STORAGE:	xD
OTHER:	320 x 240 at 30fps movie mode, panorama function, 3cm super macro
DIMENSIONS:	105.5 x 74.5 x 71mm
WEIGHT:	285g

scores

PROS: Good functionality, RAW, LCD and EVF

CONS: Bland looks, some fringing, some oversharpening and image noise

features	17
ease of use	16
image quality	18
design	17
value	18

86%

KODAK EASYSHARE ONE

quick view

PRICE £399

- **CCD** 4.23 MP CCD, 4.0 MP effective
- **LENS** 36– 108mm f2.8-4.8 (35mm equivalent)
- **SHUTTER SPEEDS** 1/2 – 1/448th sec
- **ISO** Auto, 80, 100, 200, 400
- **EXP MODES** Auto, 16 scene modes
- **FLASH** 0.6-3.2m (W) 0.6-2.3m (T)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** n/a/ 3-inch TFT LCD, 230,000 pixels
- **OTHER** SD/MMC, 256Mb int, 640 x 480 movie clips
- **POWER** Lithium-ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 103 x 63 x 26mm/225g

4 mega pixels

top

The camera is finished in an attractive two-tone white-silver, and is thicker than you'd expect thanks to its flip-out back panel

front

The minimalist front view gives no indication of the complexity and innovation lurking within

side

The back panel flips out on a hinge but, strangely, there's no catch to lock it against the body

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NIKON P1
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Kodak Easyshare One

The world's first wi-fi digicam is packed with innovation, but does it live up to its promise, asks **Nigel Atherton**

I was very surprised when the most innovative new camera launch last spring was from Kodak – which is not a company known, in recent years, for ground-breaking cameras. It has taken an eternity for the EasyShare One to actually ship, but my excitement has barely diminished.

So what's so special about it? It's only got 4MP and a 3x zoom after all. Well for starters, the entire back of the camera swings out 180° and then swivels 180° to reveal a whopping 3in LCD screen. Kodak digicams have always been synonymous with almost childishly simple operation, with big, clear menus, but the menu on the EasyShare One is particularly large, for a good reason – it's a touch screen. Nimble-fingered users can just prod the options they want within each of the various menus, or for the spoon-fingered among us there's a handy stylus which slides neatly out of the side, so you can just tap your choices with the tip, as you would with a PDA.

Impressed? Hold on, I'm not finished yet. The EasyShare One comes with a generous 256MB worth of built-in memory, eliminating the need for a media card for average users – though it has an SD card slot too. Of course, media cards are useful for getting your pictures from the camera to your PC or printer. But Kodak has thought of this, too.

The 'One' comes with built-in wi-fi, for wireless image transfer to your PC or printer (if wi-fi enabled), emailing wirelessly to friends and family or uploading to the Kodak Gallery website for printing or displaying. Just pop up the wi-fi card like an aerial. You can do this at home or while supping on a skinny Mochachino in Starbucks. In a place like Brighton, where I live, the entire city has virtually blanket wi-fi coverage so that's an exciting feature. (Cue thoughts of sitting in a beachfront café uploading my test results to the office.)

I want this camera to succeed, because I think innovation and imagination should be rewarded, but there are one or two things about it which raise eyebrows from the off. First, it's rather bigger than I remember, and than it looks in pictures I've seen since. It's not only wider but thicker – with the hinged section it's like attaching, say, an iPod to the back of a Pentax Optio. It's very well-built and well finished though, with an all-metal construction, which also makes it quite heavy. One minor niggle is that I wish they'd fitted a latch to lock the LCD panel onto the body – it's easy to catch the edge and flip it open unintentionally.

There are two ways to switch the camera on. If the LCD is facing inwards then just flip it out. If it's already facing out, then press the power button on the top. I timed the former method of switch-on at eight seconds and the latter a barely faster seven. Mercifully there's almost no shutter lag when taking a picture but the write time afterwards is about six seconds. To bypass this, there are two burst modes, 'First' (which takes five shots in rapid succession) and 'Last' (which keeps shooting while your finger's on the button and saves the last five when you let go). Obviously neither of these modes works with flash.

With the LCD folded out, the camera's centre of balance shifts to the left, making it difficult to hold one handed. When it's folded against the body the balance is better, but your thumb rests right on top of where the menu and share buttons are, so if you grip it too firmly you'll be activating one of them.

The shooting info on the LCD can be switched off, but more fun can be had by tapping on the various

WI-FI CARD
Pop it up like an aerial to activate wireless image transfer to a suitably enabled PC, printer or the Kodak Gallery website

SHARE BUTTON
Pressing the Share button provides a bewildering variety of options, including: email, print, upload to the web, or transfer to a PC

THREE-INCH TOUCH SCREEN
To select the various modes and functions in both camera and playback mode, simply prod the screen with your fingers or the supplied stylus, which slides neatly into a slot on the side of the camera

ALBUMS
Arrange your photos into albums, name them, add captions, crop them, mark them as favourites – the Easyshare One offers an unparalleled variety of post-shooting options

image quality

The 'One' doesn't enable selection of the level of compression or the file format, only the number of pixels. The highest, 4MP, isn't a lot these days but it's probably enough for the target audience of this camera, most of whom will never print anything bigger than 6x4". At this size the pictures look great but enlarge them and the imperfections become clear. Heavy compression produces visible jpeg artefacts such as pixel blocking in skies and blurry patches in fine detail such as brickwork (see right). Edge definition falls away somewhat and there's prominent barrel distortion. The dreaded fringing also pops up around high-contrast edges, but on the plus side exposures were mostly spot on, with good retention of bright highlight detail and pleasing colour rendition.

see more on the web

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read-outs (flash mode, exposure compensation etc) to adjust them. You can even change from auto mode to one of 16 scene modes by touching the screen (including a no sound/no flash 'Polite' mode – does that mean the other modes are rude?). So far so good, but with such

'The camera found my home wireless network within seconds'

a big screen there's no viewfinder and unfortunately, even on a moderately bright day, it was hard to view it, making framing difficult. That LCD sucks up the power too – the battery died after just a day's shooting.

On the plus side, the menu is very well designed and contains some cool features, such as a qwerty keyboard for tapping out picture captions, email addresses and so forth. You can organise your captured shots into albums or on a calendar timeline, mark them as favourites or tag them for sharing. The share menu couldn't be simpler, and ditto the set-up menu, from where the camera found my home wireless network within a couple of seconds. There's even a clever on-board cropping feature, with an expandable bounding box (it saves your cropped version as a copy). But I became aware that I was having more fun playing in the menu of the Easy-Share One than I was taking pictures with it, and that isn't a good sign.

VERDICT

Kodak should be applauded for creating such an innovative and imaginative camera, even if the end result doesn't always succeed in every department. As a device for sharing pictures it is without equal, though it isn't quite as good at taking them. However, I suspect that gadget fans will love it despite its shortcomings. WDC

specifications

MANUFACTURER:	Kodak
MODEL:	EasyShare One
PRICE:	£399.99
CCD:	4.23 MP CCD, 4.0 MP effective
MAX PRINT SIZE:	11.5 x 8.6 inch at 200dpi
LENS:	36– 108mm f2.8-4.8 (35mm equivalent)
SHUTTER SPEEDS:	1/2 – 1/448th sec
ISO:	Auto, 80, 100, 200, 400
EXP MODES:	A, 16 scene modes
FLASH:	0.6-3.2m (W) 0.6-2.3m (T)
DRIVE MODES:	Single, Burst
METER:	Multi-pattern, centre spot, centre-weighted
WHITE BALANCE:	Auto, 3 presets
FOCUS:	Multi-zone, center-spot, macro
VIEWFINDER:	n/a
MONITOR:	3-inch TFT LCD, 230,000 pixels
CONNECTION:	DC, AV, Kodak Dock
REC FORMAT:	Jpeg/EXIF v2.21, Quicktime Mov
FILE TYPE:	EXIF, DPOF, DCF
VIDEO OUTPUT:	NTSC, Pal
POWER:	Lithium-ion
STORAGE:	SD/MMC, 256Mb int
OTHER:	640 x 480 movie clips at 24fps, 10-second self-timer, 2-shot self timer
DIMENSIONS:	103 x 63 x 26mm
WEIGHT:	225g

scores

PROS: Big LCD, touch screen, built-in memory, Wi-Fi, simplicity

CONS: Battery consumption, so-so image quality, lack of manual control, pricey for 4MP

features	16
ease of use	18
image quality	15
design	17
value	16

82%

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Stiff Little *Figures*

Gavin Stoker discovers from its creators how Tim Burton's 'Corpse Bride' became the first animated feature to be shot entirely on digital still cameras

'I was worried Corpse Bride would look like a video game... but digital does give it an overall sheen and clarity that I like'

The latest offering from the warped imagination of Hollywood director Tim Burton – the wiry-haired auteur responsible for 'Edward Scissorhands', 'Batman', 'Beetlejuice' and 'The Nightmare Before Christmas' – 'Corpse Bride' will be exciting to WDC readers for being the first feature film to be entirely animated using stop-motion techniques captured on a digital stills camera. The 16.7-megapixel Canon EOS 1Ds Mark II SLR was used throughout, images from which were output to Final Cut Pro software for editing together on a G5 Mac.

Co-directed frame by frame by Burton and stop-motion expert Mike Johnson using two dozen EOS 1Ds's, the comic tale of a doomed Victorian-era love triangle features a diverse range of talent voicing the mannequins. Based on a Russian folk tale, its production involved 26 sets and hundreds of 12-inch high puppets (silicon rubber placed over a pliable metal frame). It was an undertaking that lasted 55 weeks of shooting, compared with a live action film's 12 to 14 weeks, because the process of stop-motion animation itself – whereby puppets are manipulated in tiny increments – requires almost Herculean patience.

Each pose by the puppet – sometimes a movement of less than a millimetre – is photographed as a single frame. Once this is captured on the 1Ds, the animators return to move the puppets a small amount again, and the process is repeated. The crew worked 12-hour days for footage lasting one or two seconds.

Despite the hard slog, the end result has a dazzlingly three-dimensional quality that can't easily be replicated by the latest CGI. 'I love the fact that stop-motion animation is so tactile,' says Burton. 'There's something wonderful about being able to physically touch and move the characters, and to see their world »

Left: Corpse Bride is the latest Tim Burton film, and features long-time collaborator Johnny Depp and Tim's real-life partner Helena Bonham-Carter voicing the lead characters

Right: The film is a macabre folk tale in the style of Burton's previous animated film, the classic Nightmare Before Christmas

Above: The puppets, around 12" high, were made from silicon rubber placed over a pliable metal frame, and had to be moved in tiny increments of as little as a millimetre between frames – each captured using the Canon EOS 1DS Mk II digital SLR

actually exist. It's similar to making a live action film – if you're doing it all on blue screen, it doesn't give you the feeling of actually being there, which the stop-motion process does.'

Despite choosing the Canon 1DS for shooting the movie, the London-based production team opted for Nikon lenses, attaching them to the Canon bodies using NEOS adapters. The Nikon D2H had been the team's first choice after film cameras – until they noticed visible pixels in dark areas of the frame – and nearly $100,000 worth of Nikon lenses had already been invested in.

As the 1Ds doesn't offer video out, the crew also had to mount tiny video cameras just above the lenses to provide a live preview and invaluable instant feedback. They found the quality from the 1Ds meant images could be enlarged 30-40% without showing any degradation in quality. In the words of co-director Johnson, the EOS cameras also gave the film-makers 'subtle colour temperature tones' the competition at the time couldn't provide.

Because of the huge RAW file sizes that started to stack up once filming began, each image was converted to QuickTime to keep things manageable. However, the fact that the images were digital to start with – and no rolls of film had to be sent to a lab and processed before Corpse Bride's editors could start work – quickened the production process. Ironically perhaps, the final digital images were then burnt on to film for cinema screening.

'The time saving was the single biggest factor in going digital. Over the course of a 55-week shoot, if we can shave a few hours off every day it really adds up'

'It's interesting,' muses Johnson, 'because a lot of people thought that computers and digital technology would be the death of stop-motion animation, but really it's bringing it forward.'

'Mike really has a sensitivity to the medium,' nods Burton. 'There are not many people who truly understand the process, and it's hard to communicate that to people when they don't come from that rarefied world.'

STOP... AND GO

For his part, Johnson claims the biggest challenge was getting the rest of the crew up to speed in time to start work on the picture and meet their pre-allocated completion date. 'And also convincing Warner Brothers that we should go with digital; it was a bit of leap of faith,' he adds. 'We had been planning to shoot on film, rented some old Mitchell film cameras built in the 1930s – a lot of the same ones that had been used on 'Nightmare...' – and hired our crew based on that. It was only when we went into the shoot that we finally got the go-ahead to swap to digital and had to come up with something really fast. Choosing the cameras, working out the bugs in the system and refining the process went on throughout the shoot. But the advantages far outweighed the challenges – digital helped streamline the process.'

From initial alarm at having to learn a new skill set, the crew were quickly convinced by the results. 'I'd been pushing for a digital solution since I was brought on the film,' recalls Johnson. 'Chris Watts, our effects consultant, had the idea of using still cameras, and along with Pete Kozachik, our director of photography, worked out what the approach would be.'

As a result, Johnson says he notices a different look and feel to the stop-motion techniques used on the earlier Burton animation 'Nightmare Before Christmas' – shot on film – and 'Corpse Bride'.

'That said, originally we didn't want it to look digital,' reveals Johnson. 'We worked hard to recreate the feel of film negative and the frames were processed in a way that emulated film. But I think digital gives it an overall sheen and clarity that I like. At first I was worried it would look like a video game and lose the highs and the lows. We were even going to try to introduce some artificial film grain to have it replicate film to a further degree.'

The story itself is divided between low-lit scenes in the Land of the Living – with a lot of grey and black tones – and the Land of the Dead, which, comically, is a lot brighter, more colourful and vivid. The Canon cameras therefore had to handle and faithfully replicate drastic shifts in colour. 'In many cases we would over-light shots, then take the exposure down a couple of stops in post production to give it a look that was slightly darker than it was,' Johnson reveals. 'We had to figure it out as we went along.'

Another beauty of shooting digitally was the instant feedback. 'For me, the time saving was the single biggest factor for going digital,' the director continues. 'Over the course of a 55-week shoot, if we can shave a few hours off every day it really adds up. We didn't have to wait for rushes to come back from the lab;

we could approve a shot instantly and get the animator started on his next shot. It also gave us more time to rehearse shots and camera moves, and refine things much more quickly.'

The movie's release date was carved in stone, says Johnson, 'So we had a pretty tight schedule – 55 weeks as opposed to 'Nightmare's' 72 weeks. We were going at a rapid pace and digital was the only way we could have done it.'

So does Johnson now believe he's opened a door for other film-makers? 'I hope so,' he replies. 'I couldn't really think of a reason to shoot on film any more; the image quality is great and it really takes some hurdles out of the way and lets us do things we would be hesitant to do on film: like long shots and crowd shots. It will open up stop motion to a lot of people and hopefully make it more accessible.'

Find out more about 'Corpse Bride' at ***www.corpsebridemovie.com*** *and catch the movie on general release from Oct 22.* **WDC**

Top Tips for successful *Stop-motion Movies:*

'There a few different programs out there that people can use to grab single frames,' advises 'Corpse Bride' co-director Mike Johnson. 'So WDC readers should grab a camera, grab an object and start moving stuff around.'

However, before you begin making your own animated story, there are a number of key creative and technological ingredients to take into account that will make the whole process a lot more enjoyable and productive, as Mike instructs.

WHAT DO I NEED TO GET STARTED?
Taking as read that you've a strong idea, a script of sorts – even just a list of shots if you're aiming for – plus, most usefully, a storyboard (a comic book-like sequence of drawings showing what you'll be shooting to enable you to check where you are, at any point), there are other things you'll need:

TRIPOD
You need a tripod – and a cable release if your camera has the ability to use one. It's your subject that you want to animate, not your kit.

PHOTOGRAPHIC LAMP
Turn off your camera's flash and invest in a constant light source – such as a photographic lamp – to keep the look and feel of your stop motion a constant. Otherwise you'll introduce an unwanted flickering effect during play back.

MANUAL SETTINGS
For the same reason, if possible, set exposure and white balance manually and keep to it. Using the camera on automatic might introduce unwanted variants between frames.

CLOSE UPS
If you're shooting wire-frame puppets, figures made of clay or anything requiring a table top set up, check your camera's ability to focus close up. Many compacts have a fixed macro facility, while there is a range of macro lenses to suit digital SLRs.

PREVIEW SHOTS
Ideally you'll want some form of live feed from your camera so you can compare the current frame with the one previously shot, side-by-side. A number of compacts, like the Canon A85 or A95, and DSLRs allow you to connect the camera to a PC for a live preview. You can tab back through your captured frames on your camera's LCD for rough comparison, but displaying them full size – or larger, so focus and exposure can be checked – on a monitor is best.

Top: Co-director Mike Johnson (left) with a colleague on the set of Corpse Bride **Above:** Manipulating the leading lady between frames

TURNING STILL IMAGES INTO *MOVING PICTURES*

With your camera connected to your computer, you'll next need software that will enable you to marry the single frames into a fluid piece of animation.

'The program we used on 'Corpse Bride' was developed for the film,' says Mike Johnson. 'But there are some programs commercially available: FrameThief is good.' Available for Macs, FrameThief is downloadable for $40 from www.framethief.com, while Stop Motion Pro – though specifically for digital video (DV) cameras – can be found at www.stopmotionpro.com

FrameThief offers support for digital stills cameras; it produces sequential image files for the animator to use in any fashion, such as Photoshop editing of individual frames. As the team did on 'Corpse Bride', the resulting frames are easily converted into a QuickTime movie using FrameThief's export capability or its companion program, FrameSplicer.

'That's the most exciting thing about using digicams for stop motion,' adds Johnson. '30 years ago it was a bunch of guys in their garages with Super 8 film cameras. Now anyone can grab a digital camera and shoot a stop motion.

'What makes stop motion unique is the hand-crafted performance of it and that hasn't changed. The digital cameras don't make the animator's job easier – he still has to move his puppet one frame at a time – but it removes a lot of guesswork and gives us confidence to move forward. It's a nice blend of old and new technique.'

Books Glorious Books

During 2005 we've reviewed many photography books. Here are our favourites...

Travel Photography

Richard l'Anson, Lonely Planet £10.99

Interspersed with inspiring photos from around the globe to whet your appetite, 'Travel Photography' is packed with useful and immensely readable advice. It is a worthy addition to any bookshelf and represents great value for money.

Landscape Photography

Peter Eastway, Lonely Planet £10.99

As expected from a Lonely Planet book, stunning and diverse photographs from around the world are used throughout. The price is reasonable and there is enough well-presented information to ensure it is recommended.

Outdoor Photography: Portraits

Cathy Joseph, AVA £24.95

Anyone with a strong interest in portrait photography will benefit from reading this. The pictures used in this book are incredibly diverse, and it is particularly interesting to gain an insight into what a particular photographer was thinking when they composed a scene.

The Great Life Photographers

Thames & Hudson £24.95

The biggest anthology of Life images yet produced contains many iconic shots you'll recognise immediately, along with many that you won't. Arranged alphabetically by photographer, at over 600 pages, this is an amazing book and great value.

World Press Photo 2005

Karl Lundelin, Thames and Hudson £12.95

The World Press Photo exhibition is the largest annual press photography competition in the world – photographers from 123 countries submitted more than 69,000 images into the 2004 competition. The standard of photography is superb, featuring some of the most powerful images you are likely to see.

A Comprehensive Guide to Digital Close-up Photography

John Clements AVA £16.95

From simple macro shots, to abstracts and more advanced examples of Photoshop wizardry, not only do the images look superb, but also each serves to illustrate a particular technique or function.

Family

Family, edited by Sophie Spencer-Wood, with a preface by Henri Peretz, Phaidon Press £24.95

Describing itself as an 'exploration of the universal theme of family', this book is a collection of family pictures taken by 56 acclaimed photographers including Terence Donovan and David Bailey. The often incredibly emotive photos span the ages, illustrating the stylistic changes of family photography.

Landscape

Charlie Waite, Collins and Brown £17.99

'Landscape' by esteemed photographer Charlie Waite is a collection of 50 of his favourite pictures and the – often fascinating – story behind them. Instead of cramming the book with exotic locations, many of the inspiring images feature places closer to home, leaving a lasting impression.

Surreal Digital Photography

Barry Huggins and Ian Probert, Ilex Press £17.95

If you like to play around with Photoshop, and your picture tastes tend towards the wacky, then this book is for you. The authors give Photoshop a good workout as they show off a variety of special effects and show how to achieve them.

Starting Photography

Michael Langford and Philip Andrews, Focal Press £14.99

Starting Photography is packed with information to help beginners become more familiar with their cameras and improve their technique. Diagrams and photographs demystify information, helping the book strike a balance between technical detail and shooting advice.

Adobe Photoshop CS2 for Photographers

Martin Evening, Focal Press £27.99

Richly illustrated, this is an invaluable, reasonably priced guide for anyone serious about Photoshop. Presenting clearly, in-depth information about what Photoshop can do and the potential for the digital photographer. The supplied CD is packed with shortcuts, quick time movies and images.

Digital SLR Handbook

Andy Rouse, Photographers' Institute Press £14.95

Covering technical operation, file formats, camera features, and offering shooting advice, this handbook is an engaging read and Rowse intersperses it with photographic anecdotes and stunning images. The only complaint is that, at 144 pages, it leaves you wanting more.

Complete Digital Photography

Tom Ang, New Holland £17.99

Offering advice on choosing the right cameras and software, the straightforward language and uncluttered interface make this a useful book for beginners or anyone who is just confused about how to use their camera effectively.

Adobe Photoshop Elements 3.0 A-Z

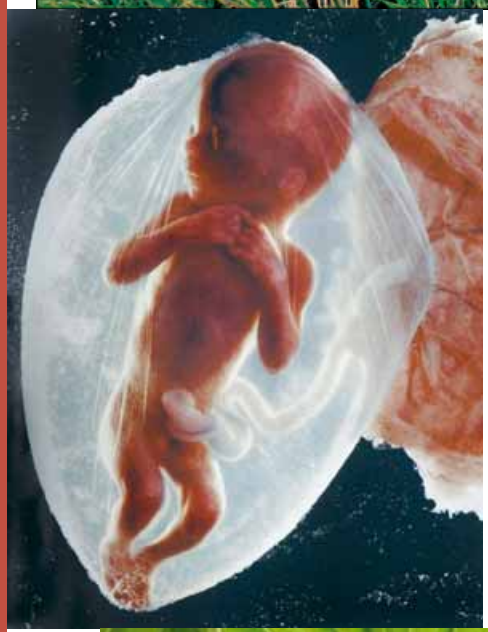
Philip Andrews, Focal Press, £15.99

This digestible A-Z covers effects, new features and tools using straightforward language. Many images from the book can be downloaded from the accompanying website, which also contains 10 video tutorials to illustrate new features.

Stretch: The world of panoramic photography

Nick Meers, Rotovision £19.95

This isn't a new book, but it is the best book on the subject to be published in recent years. All the major types, techniques and cameras of panoramic photography are covered, along with a mouth-watering selection of mini-portfolios by some of the best exponents of the art.



IMAGES FAR LEFT

Top: Travel Photography, Lonely Planet Images

Bottom: Outdoor Photography: Portraits, copyright Jim Allen

IMAGES THIS PAGE

Above: World Press Photo 2005. Aids Orphan, Brent Stirton, South Africa

Left: The Great Life Photographers, copyright Life magazine

Below: A Comprehensive Guide to Macro Photography. 'Urban Jungle' by Mary-Ella Keith

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www.konicaminolta.co.uk

The essentials of imaging

Premium Flash

Premium flash unit features and performance are explored by **Ian Burley**

WHY YOU NEED ONE

Premium flash units justify their premium price tags by providing extra flash power and system sophistication. Extra power means being able to illuminate wider scenes or subjects further away. It usually means better multiple-frame burst capacity and quicker recycling times. System sophistication adds up to better communication between the camera and the flash unit or units, both on and off the camera, including wireless capability, resulting in better and more consistent exposures. All these advantages can be critical for professional work.

EXTRA WIDE ANGLE DIFFUSION LENS

These are increasingly popular integrated pull-out clear plastic diffusers that spread the light to cover super wideangle lenses. The range of the flash gun reduces as the coverage widens.

ZOOM HEAD

Concentrate the energy of your flash where it's needed when using telephoto lenses, or cover the width viewed by wideangle lenses. Motorised zooming means the flash automatically alters its coverage to match the focal length your zoom lens has been set to.

TWIST AND SWIVEL HEAD

Bounce the flash beam off a ceiling or wall for softer illumination. Some premium flash units now include a small white reflector for catchlight enhancement to portraits when using bounced flash.

AF ASSIST ILLUMINATION

The flash unit can supplement the camera's own AF illuminator, if present, providing more accurate autofocus at longer distances. Some flash units can illuminate wide-position AF points as well.

DEDICATED HOTSHOE

Extra contacts provide pathways for proprietary data exchange between the flash unit and the camera. This enables the use of through-the-lens metering and other camera information that can control the flash output for ideal exposures. On some models the flash tells the camera about its own information, like white balance settings.

INFORMATION DISPLAY

An LCD status display is a must for a premium-class flash unit and most are illuminated for night-time use.

WIRELESS SLAVE CAPABILITY

Supported by most premium flash systems, this lets the camera control one, or even several, remote flash units or slaves, sharing selected shooting data for a coherently managed portable lighting set-up without wires.

EXTERNAL POWER AND CABLE SYNC

Connections for high voltage external power supplies and wired off-camera TTL controlled flash are virtually standard features on premium flash units.

Wireless *multi flash*

The idea of a flash studio setup that can be packed away into a small bag is a reality that wireless multi-flash can deliver – and there is no spaghetti of sync cords to get knotted up. The most sophisticated systems from Canon, Nikon and Konica Minolta enable the remote slave flash units to be automatically configured by the camera that meters the scene through the lens, enabling a sophisticated degree of exposure accuracy without messing about with external flash meters.

The clever bit is the way the camera communicates with the slaves, using a real-time flash pulse-code system, turning the flash unit itself into a wireless data network. Even if you only have one external flash unit, don't forget that if your camera supports this feature, you can control it wirelessly via the camera's built-in pop-up flash. Ratio settings mean you can alter the contribution of each flash unit to the overall exposure. The position of one unit might require its effect to be very subtle, so its ratio can be reduced to maybe one third of the overall flash power output used collectively by all the flash units. Wireless multi-flash systems certainly open up a whole new world of creative possibilities with maximum convenience.

SIGMA EF-500 DG SUPER

£199.99

SPECIFICATIONS

CONTACT www.sigma-imaging-uk.com
GUIDE NUMBER 50m @ISO 100 @105mm
180 DEGREE TWIST Yes
ZOOM COVERAGE (135 f=mm) 28-105
WIDE ANGLE DIFFUSER (min f) 17mm
WIRELESS TTL MULTI FLASH COMPATIBILITY Yes
COMPATIBILITY Incl Nikon i-TTL, Canon E-TTL 1&2, Konica Minolta
FP MODE Yes **WEIGHT** 335g

Sigma is one of the main third-party flashgun choices for DSLR users but, unlike some Metz models that use interchangeable system adapters, Sigma units are built to be compatible with specific systems. Beware of the age of, say, a Nikon-compatible Sigma box as earlier ones won't be i-TTL compatible, for example.

The Sigma EF-500 DG Super is Sigma's top hotshoe model and keenly priced, but it has all the key features. It doesn't quite match the quality feel of other units, especially as it's quite large but also surprisingly light. In use, however, it performed pretty well, with just a little un-evenness at the bottom of the frame, though in practice not really noticeable. Thoroughly recommended if you are on a tight budget.

SCORES		
Performance	17	TOTAL
Features	18	
Build Quality	17	89%
Ease of use	18	
Value	19	

KONICA MINOLTA P-FLASH 5600HS(D)

£329.99

SPECIFICATIONS

CONTACT www.konicaminolta.co.uk
GUIDE NUMBER 56m @ 85mm @ ISO 100
180 DEGREE TWIST Yes
ZOOM COVERAGE (135 f=mm) 24-85
WIDE ANGLE DIFFUSER (min f) 17mm
WIRELESS TTL MULTIFLASH COMPATIBILITY Yes
FP MODE Yes
SYSTEM COMPATIBILITY Minolta TTL ADI
WEIGHT (excluding batteries) 370g

The Program Flash 5600HS(D) has been around since 2000, well before Konica Minolta entered the DSLR market, but thankfully Minolta's forward thinking in implementing pre-flash and ADI (distance information communication from compatible lenses) means the 5600HS(D) is fully compatible with Konica Minolta DSLR models as long as compatible D-type lenses are fitted.

The 5600 is also very powerful, achieving a 56m ISO 100 guide number rating at its maximum flash zoom of 85mm. However, its flash zoom doesn't adjust for narrower DSLR angle of view. System-wise, the 5600 works with Minolta's multi-flash wireless slave system and it has lots of accessories. There are no complaints about its performance when used with D-type lenses.

SCORES		
Performance	19	TOTAL
Features	17	
Build Quality	18	89%
Ease of use	17	
Value	18	

CANON SPEEDLITE 580EX

£349.99

SPECIFICATIONS

CONTACT www.canon.co.uk
GUIDE NUMBER 58m @105mm @ISO 100
180 DEGREE TWIST Yes
ZOOM COVERAGE (135 f=mm) 24-105
WIDE ANGLE DIFFUSER (min f) 14mm
WIRELESS TTL MULTIFLASH COMPATIBILITY Yes
FP MODE Yes
SYSTEM COMPATIBILITY Canon E-TTL1/ 2
WEIGHT 375g

The 580EX is smaller than its 550EX predecessor and yet more powerful; indeed the 580EX is one of the most powerful hotshoe flash units you can buy.

It is latest-generation Canon E-TTL 2 compliant and fully compatible with all Canon DSLRs, adjusting zoom coverage according to sensor size. Though this is a complicated flash unit, it's relatively easy to operate its main functions. A nice feature is the retractable catch-light reflector panel for bounced flash shots with a bit more sparkle. The unit can also communicate with the camera to optimise auto white balance. The 580EX was a joy to use; hardly ever having to wait for the ready light to return, and exposure accuracy was as good as any flash unit here, as was evenness of coverage, even at wide angles. Expensive, but worth it.

SCORES		
Performance	19	TOTAL
Features	18	
Build Quality	19	91%
Ease of use	17	
Value	18	

NIKON SPEEDLIGHT SB-800

£295.00

SPECIFICATIONS

CONTACT www.nikon.co.uk
GUIDE NUMBER 56m @ ISO100 @ 105mm
180 DEGREE TWIST Yes
ZOOM COVERAGE (135 f=mm) 24-105
WIDE ANGLE DIFFUSER (min f) 14mm
WIRELESS TTL MULTI FLASH COMPATIBILITY Yes
FP MODE Yes
COMPATIBILITY Nikon i-TTL
WEIGHT (excluding batteries) 350g

It looks so small, but the Speedlight SB-800, which is at the heart of Nikon's ultra-sophisticated multi-flash wireless Creative Lighting System (CLS), sports an above-average maximum guide number. Included accessories are a remote stand, diffusion dome, coloured gel filter set, and case.

There's also a clever clip-on fifth AA battery holder. This enables the SB-800 to reduce recycle times by up to a quarter. Along with the ubiquitous built-in wideangle adapter lens, a catchlight reflector is provided for better bounced flash portraits. A metal quick-release hotshoe foot is impressive, and there are nice touches like a dedicated button for the modelling light mode. The SB-800 performed faultlessly in our tests, being fast, even and accurate.

SCORES		
Performance	19	TOTAL 93%
Features	19	
Build Quality	19	
Ease of use	17	
Value	19	

METZ 54 MZ-4i

£299.99 WITH SCA ADAPTER

SPECIFICATIONS

CONTACT www.metz.de
GUIDE NUMBER 54m @ISO 100 @105mm
180 DEGREE TWIST Yes
ZOOM COVERAGE (135 f=mm) 24-105
WIDE ANGLE DIFFUSER (min f) 20mm
MULTI FLASH COMPATIBILITY £33 option
COMPATIBILITY Incl Nikon i-TTL, Canon E-TTL 1&2, Konica Minolta, Pentax, Olympus via SCA
FP MODE Yes **WEIGHT** (exc batteries) 480g

The Metz 54 MZ-4i is the largest and heaviest of the flash units in this roundup and by no means the most powerful. But it does have the longest list of features, including a secondary forward facing fill flash and an interchangeable dedicated foot adapter system that means the 54 MZ-4i offers unrivalled system compatibility.

A couple of niggles; its retractable wideangle adapter only covers 20mm lenses, is bottom mounted so can't be used as a make-shift bounce catchlight reflector and the jog-dial operated control panel was pretty unfathomable without the user guide. Wireless slave use means a £33 option. In use, the Metz recycled quickly and coverage was even. Well worth considering, especially if you use more than one system.

SCORES		
Performance	18	TOTAL 92%
Features	20	
Build Quality	19	
Ease of use	16	
Value	19	

OLYMPUS FL50

£349.99

SPECIFICATIONS

CONTACT www.olympus.co.uk
GUIDE NUMBER 50m @85mm @ISO 100
180 DEGREE TWIST Yes
ZOOM COVERAGE (135 f=mm) 24-85
WIDE ANGLE DIFFUSER (min f) 16mm
WIRELESS TTL MULTIFLASH COMPATIBILITY No
FP MODE Yes
COMPATIBILITY Olympus E-System
WEIGHT (excluding batteries) 378g

The Olympus FL50 has a neat, sturdy and easy to use design but the FL50 is not quite as powerful as the brightest flash units here.

It also lacks advanced wireless slave facilities, though Olympus has high-capacity battery packs and wired off-camera mounting options. The FL50 has a great control layout and LCD status display that's easy to grasp without having to resort to the manual. Being designed for the E-System, there are no camera model compatibility worries and the FL50 can be used with recent fixed lens Olympus cameras like the C-8080WZ. Performance-wise, the FL50 delivered the goods with adequate, if not excellent, recycling times, but very even coverage. It's a relatively high price, though.

SCORES		
Performance	17	TOTAL 87%
Features	16	
Build Quality	19	
Ease of use	19	
Value	16	

Flash Power

Electronic flash is all about converting battery current into a very high voltage using a special transformer and discharging it across electrodes in a gas-filled discharge tube, causing bright light to be radiated by the excited ionised gas molecules. Modern electronic flash units can interrupt the discharge process accurately by using a thyristor. This means that the flash duration, and thus intensity, can be varied. A shorter flash duration will mean less brightness, but it also means that less of the capacitor charge is used up, enabling multiple flash shots in the time the capacitor normally takes to recharge or recycle from zero.

The bigger the capacity of your capacitor, the more flashes you will get out of it before it needs to recycle. Meanwhile, the rate at which the capacitor can be recycled depends on the power characteristics of the battery. Nikon's SB-800 can be fitted with an additional AA battery, making five in total, and this can reduce recycling times by up to a quarter. Even better are special high voltage and capacity external flash power units that bring down recycling times even further, allowing much longer frame bursts to be flash illuminated and at higher power settings. Flash units are usually rated for maximum power using Guide Numbers, which are constants used in calculating exposure setting if the distance to the subject is known. Think GN = f/stop x flash-to-subject distance. To calculate the f/stop needed, divide the guide number by the distance to the subject.

Freedom built in

Imagine a camera that reached out to wherever your creativity took flight. Now grasp the reality; the Samsung Pro 815. It features an incrediible wide angle to 15x zoom lens (the world's longest), so you won't miss shots while changing lenses. Then the extended battery life gives you the freedom to take up to 450 shots. The world's largest rear LCD and top LCD mean you'll take pictures with more ease than ever before. Finally, the fully-manual capability gives you complete freedom of expression. No extras needed; creative freedom is built-in. **www.samsungcamera.co.uk**

Wide angle to 15 x Zoom & Top LCD

Massive 3.5 inch Rear LCD

The power of 8 Megapixels

Samsung **Pro 815**

SAMSUNG

PRICE Euro 124

- **TYPE** Digital correction software and RAW processor
- **SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS** Microsoft Windows 2000,Windows XP Professional or Home Edition / Apple Mac G4 or G5
- **FILE SUPPORT** RAW ,DNG, JPEG
- **CONTACT** www.dolabs.com

DXO corrects colour and distortion, and improves contrast and sharpness with an easy to use interface

DXO Optics Pro 3

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

Jamie Harrison tests DXO Optics Pro 3.0, software that is also a RAW processor and is designed to fix most common image problems. Is this a miracle software?

scores

PROS: Works very well, Easy to use, Good value

CONS: No Olympus modules, Needs fast processor

features	19
ease of use	18
performance	19
design	17
value	19

92%

The promise of digital imaging, that images can be enhanced and fixed on the PC, usually makes life harder for the photographer. As the technology has evolved, we've learned that there are more problems around every corner. The original selling point of DSLRs was that we could continue to use our old lenses, but we've now learned that they don't give us the best results, so manufacturers are now making digitally dedicated lenses, optimised for digital sensors. Nevertheless, many of the old problems still exist: distortion, vignetting, sharpness, often compounded by the nature of digital imaging.

DO Labs is a French company that has developed software called DXO Optics, that fixes these problems. It doesn't stop there either. DXO Optics Pro is also a RAW processor, and can fix other problems such as noise, exposure, colour, white balance and so on. It offers pretty much everything that Photoshop RAW offers and more, but with a twist.

The system is modular and can be customised to suit your system. DO Labs analyses individual lenses with camera bodies, recognises the optical characteristics of the lens and sensors and fixes them. These modules can then be downloaded and installed, and the software automatically knows which camera and lens was used. It also uses the EXIF information from your files to correct colour and exposure and so on. You may be happy with your results, but if you run the images through DXO Optics the results would be surprising. Barrel distortion from wideangle lenses is fixed, vignetting disappears and much more. Images are markedly better.

The software is easy to use. Batch processing of images can be done automatically – simply select the images and let DXO do it. If you want more control, the advanced interface lets you make your own adjustments, which can then be applied to a whole batch. For the most part, the automatic adjustments work very well, though.

Until recently each lens and camera module had to be bought separately, but DO Labs recently announced a single price. You pay your money and can download all of the modules if you wish, though for speed and disk space, as well as common sense, you're better off downloading just the modules for the lenses you actually own. As you add to your system you can go back and download new modules for no extra cost. Not every camera and lens is available yet, but they're adding new ones all the time.

The installation system is a bit of a pain: you need an internet connection, and a series of emails is sent before you can download and install the software, but within an hour you should be up and running. It's quite processor intensive, and large batches of images can take time, but they take time in Photoshop too.

VERDICT

This software presents a worry for reviewers. DXO can fix any problems I would normally look for in order to assess a camera or lens. That's all irrelevant now. For photographers it's great, though. There's now no excuse for technically or optically bad images, and that makes this software essential. WDC

ACCESSORIES

hardware

PRICE £190

- **TYPE:** Graphics Tablet
- **INTERFACE:** Bluetooth
- **OTHER:** 512 pressure levels, mouse and pen included, Bluetooth capability required
- **SIZE:** A5
- **CONTACT:** www.wacom.co.uk

scores

PROS: Good control, neat

CONS: Quite expensive

features	18
ease of use	17
performance	18
design	17
value	17

87%

Wacom Graphire Bluetooth

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

Jamie Harrison tests this cool tablet

The modern world is increasingly going wireless. Take a look behind your television set or PC – how many wires do you have? Bluetooth has quickly become a standard for wireless devices, particularly PC add-ons; for example next to my Mac I now have a Bluetooth keyboard and mouse, a Bluetooth Kodak printer and a Bluetooth phone. Recently I have also been using a Bluetooth tablet and pen.

Wacom tablets are great Photoshop accessories. This one is A5 sized and, like others in the range, allows you to draw, cut out, paint and so on directly in graphics applications, using a special pen instead of a mouse. I find this a more natural way of working having used pens and pencils for about 36 years.

The Graphire Bluetooth makes this easier, especially if you hold the tablet on your lap, which I do, as the trailing wires of old were always getting tangled, as well as just being messy.

The functionality of the tablet remains unchanged from previous Graphire models. There are still 512 pressure levels, and a pair of fast-access buttons which can be customised to access tools or shortcuts. The pen also has a 'rubber' on the top so you can erase, or 'undo' in computer speak, any mistakes you may make.

It takes minutes to get used to a tablet, but once you do, you'll wonder how you got by without one.

VERDICT

The Wacom Graphire Bluetooth is not an essential tool by any means; a wired version works just as well, but it's nice to get rid of wires and gain some freedom, and make your desk a lot tidier. It's just cool. But it'd be cooler in iMac white. WDC

ACCESSORIES

software

PRICE FREE

- **TYPE:** Picture Management Software
- **FORMAT:** PC
- **SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS:** 64Mb RAM, 300MHz Pentium processor and MMX technology, Windows XP, 2000
- **FILE FORMATS:** Jpeg, Bmp, Gif, Png, Psd, Tiff
- **PRICE:** Free
- **CONTACT:** http://picasa.google.com

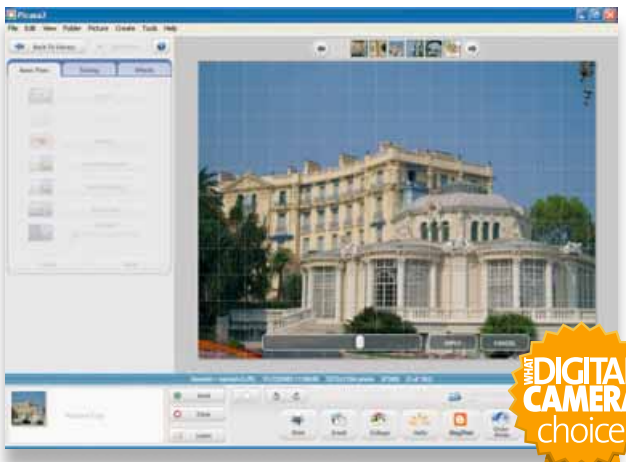
scores

PROS: Easy to use, clear interface, its free!

CONS: Limited editing and management features

features	16
ease of use	19
performance	17
design	17
value	20

89%



Picasa

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

Hannah Bouckley tries a free program from Google

It isn't often you get something for nothing, especially a program as useful as Picasa. Available as a free download, you can use it for acquiring, organising and sharing your digital photographs.

Picasa quickly searches your hard drive for digital photographs, listing folders chronologically down the side of the screen and displaying the contents as adjustable thumbnails, which you can add labels and assign stars to.

One of the main attractions of the program is the clean, user-friendly interface: the large, clearly marked buttons make it easy to view your pictures in an impressive virtual timeline or as a slideshow.

While useful, the editing tools are no substitute for a designated program. Apply (and undo) basic edits like cropping, rotating, contrast, colour and fill light to your photographs and remove red eye automatically by drawing a box over the offending eye. You can also adjust shadows, highlights and colour temperature and apply filter effects such as Soft focus and Glow.

A selection of templates enable you to print multiple pictures, but unfortunately the feature isn't very flexible; you need to specify the order before printing, otherwise Picasa does it automatically. Alternatively if you have an Internet connection you can easily order prints within Picasa, choosing between four online providers: Pixum, Photobox, Bonusprint and SnapFish.

VERDICT

While the management and editing tools are not advanced, Picasa provides the home user with everything needed to organise their photo collections. It is incredibly easy to use with a user-friendly interface and it is free! WDC

PRICE £100

- **TYPE** 6x4 Inkjet printer
- **RESOLUTION** up to 5760x1440dpi optimised
- **PRINT COST** 28p
- **INTERFACE** USB 2.0, CF, SD, xD, SM, MS, MS PRO
- **SIZE** 256 x 154 x 163mm
- **WEIGHT** 2.7kg
- **CONTACT** www.epson.co.uk

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

Epson PictureMate 100

Could this budget printer be just up your street? **Jamie Harrison** tests Epson's compact and bijou PictureMate 100

One of last Christmas' success stories, the Epson PictureMate is now onto its third incarnation, with the arrival of the PictureMate 100. This budget model may not have the 2.4inch colour LCD of the top-of-the-range 500 model, but that's no reason to rule it out.

Images are viewed on a 1.5inch colour screen, which is small but just about usable. The PictureMate 100 accepts all popular memory cards in the built-in media card slots, though Mini SD and MS Duo media need adaptors. Direct camera printing is also possible thanks to the USB 2.0 socket, which is backwards compatible with USB 1.0 cameras. Of course you could also connect it to your computer.

For mobile phone use, the printer can be used with an optional Bluetooth adapter, while the printer itself can get mobile if you use the optional battery adapter. The unit supports both USB Direct-Print and PictBridge systems, and has the ability to transfer images direct to compatible external CD-R writers or Zip Disk.

The prints are 6x4inch, borderless and, unlike many of these type of units, the PictureMate 100 uses an inkjet system instead dye sublimation. This offers an optimized resolution of 5760 x 1440 dpi and a three-picolitre ink drop size.

To make life easier, Epson produces a pack of dedicated paper and ink producing 100 prints from the PictureMate. Individual print prices average 28p, which is more expensive than many online or high street printing services, but reasonable for inkjet. Of course, there's also the sheer convenience of printing immediately.

Print time is quite reasonable; a 5MP image direct from an SD card takes about one and a half minutes. Again this is fine for printing one or two pictures quickly, but combined with the cost of the prints, I wouldn't recommend printing a full set of images from a card, as it could take a long time and cost you a pretty penny.

Print quality is good, colour and sharpness is very crisp, while there is no sign of banding.

VERDICT

As a budget model the Epson is very good, but if you need to add the battery pack and Bluetooth module, the price starts to rise. Similarly the print cost is expensive for printing all your pictures, but this is countered by the convenience. For just printing out one or two favourite images or making quick reprints for friends and family, the Picture Mate 100 is a good choice. Epson's got another winner. WDC

scores

PROS: Print quality

CONS: Print costs

features	17
ease of use	18
performance	16
design	19
value	19

89%

WACOM

graphire4

The easy way to better pictures.

Give your pictures the look they deserve: With the new Graphire4 pen tablet from market leader Wacom, you can now accurately improve contrasts, remove unwanted details, correct exposure problems, enhance colours and much more. Try out the Graphire4 today, and you'll see just how easy it is to improve the quality of your photos!

Wacom recommends Adobe® Photoshop® Elements included in Graphire4 Studio and Studio XL boxes.

PRICE £149.99

- **TYPE:** Dye Diffusion Thermal Transfer
- **PAPER SIZE:** 6x4-inch
- **INTERFACE:** USB 2.0
- **CARDS:** CF I/II, SM, SD, MMC, MS, xD
- **OTHER:** 2-inch colour LCD, Bluetooth
- **DIMENSIONS:** 233 x 225 x 177mm/ 2.4kg
- **CONTACT:** www.samsung.co.uk

Samsung SPP2040 Photo Printer

Hannah Bouckley tests a portable printer from Samsung

With its grey and half black exterior, the SPP2040 is an attractive and well-built printer. With dimensions of 180x136x66mm it is very small – however, once you attach the paper tray and allow room for the paper to pass through at the back, it becomes clear you need to allow for (at least) double the space on your desk.

The SPP2040 uses a dye-sublimation print method, in which the paper passes back and forth as different colours are applied. Despite not particularly clear instructions, set-up is straightforward: the paper tray fits into the front, and the ink cartridge slots into the side. You can print directly from a PictBridge-compatible camera, seven different types of memory card using two slots at the front, a computer, or directly from a mobile phone with an optional Bluetooth adaptor.

What sets the SPP2040 apart from its cheaper stable-mate the SPP2020 is the tilting 2-inch colour LCD that you can use to preview and select your photographs. Printing from a memory card is easy: insert the card into the slot at the front and the printer will automatically detect the pictures. Use the four-way controller to scroll through and find the pictures you want to print, and press the menu button to make adjustments to the sharpness and brightness, particularly useful if you don't want to make edits using a PC. You can choose from a good selection of filters including sepia, vivid, antique, warm, cool and RGB, and print layouts.

Printing times are impressive, as 6x4-inch prints take around one minute five seconds, and crucially the print quality is good: skin tones are accurate and colours pleasing. Prints are fingerprint-resistant and include a special coating to protect against fading from effects of the sun and humidity.

One thing missing from the SPP2040, which would undoubtedly make it more appealing (and versatile), is a battery pack, which would enable you to print while on the move.

VERDICT

The Samsung SPP2040 is an attractive, easy-to-use printer, producing good postcard-sized prints, quickly. It isn't the cheapest home printer on the market, but the price isn't bad for the home user. WDC

scores

PROS: Easy to use, print speeds

CONS: Limited instructions

features	16
ease of use	18
performance	18
design	16
value	16

84%

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www.gitzo.com

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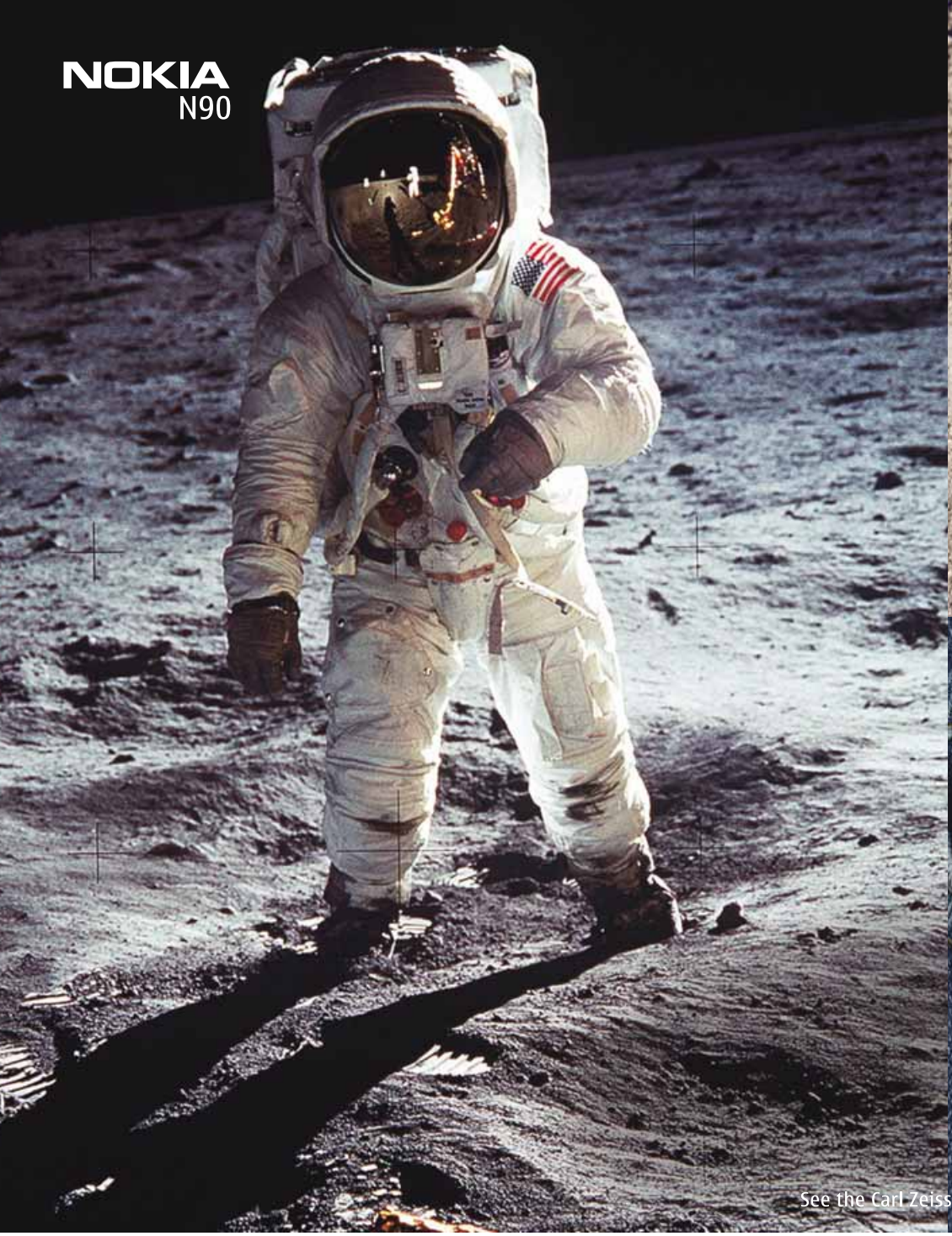

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software

PRICE £69.99

- **TYPE:** Picture-editing and management suite
- **FORMAT:** PC
- **SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS:** 256MB RAM, Windows 98 SE, ME, 2000, XP
- **CONTACT:** www.microsoft.com

scores

PROS: Good management tools

CONS: Clunky Editor interface

features	17
ease of use	17
performance	17
results	16
value	17

84%

Microsoft Digital Image Suite 2006

Hannah Bouckley looks at Microsoft's latest imaging suite

Such is Adobe's authority in the digital imaging software market for professionals and consumers, that other software manufacturers have something of a mountain to climb in order to grab a share of the market.

Aimed at the home user, Digital Image Suite 2006 is Microsoft's bid. It is comprised of three programs: the Digital Image Editor for (unsurprisingly) editing, the Digital Image Library for managing your pictures, and Photo Story 3.1 for creating slideshows.

Digital photographers will find everything they need to touch-up images in the Editor including rectifying redeye, cloning, rotating and auto-fixes. For quick access you can choose to display a selection of commands from the menu down the side of the screen, including Auto-fixes, Touch-up, Format and Effects. Unfortunately, while straightforward to operate, the interface isn't very smooth, particularly the Stack system used for organising objects (or layers.)

RAW file support is offered, and you can create a simple collage using templates and use the mini lab to apply the same effects to multiple pictures.

Photographs are displayed in the Library as thumbnails that you can enlarge or reduce in size. This excellent program enables you to organise your photographs by assigning labels to them, using the ones supplied or by creating your own. You can also add ratings from one to five to your photos.

VERDICT

While the interface isn't as smooth as that of some of its rivals, Digital Image Suite 2006 is a useful package, providing the novice user with decent editing and good management tools. WDC

ACCESSORIES

software

PRICE £24.99

- **TYPE:** Slideshow creation software
- **FORMAT:** PC
- **SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS:** 256Mb RAM, Inter Pentium 4.1.3 Ghz Processor, Windows XP, 2000, 98 SE, ME
- **FILE FORMATS SUPPORTED:** BMP, GIF, JP2, JPC, JPG, PNG, PSD, TIF
- **PRICE:** £24.99 (£14.99 upgrade)
- **CONTACT:** www.ulead.co.uk

scores

PROS: Easy to use, reasonable price

CON: Too basic for some, often slow

features	16
ease of use	18
performance	16
results	17
value	18

85%

Ulead CD & DVD PictureShow 4

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice
CD & DVD
PictureShow 4
The Easy Way to Create Photo Slideshows for TV
Critics love it. So will you!

Hannah Bouckley creates a slideshow with Ulead's latest

Creating a slideshow from your photographs and burning it onto disc to watch on television is a different way of showing off your digital pictures than printing them out. The ability to add captions, sound effects and transitions enables you to present your pictures in an entertaining and personal way. Ulead CD and DVD PictureShow 4 aims to make slideshow creation easy.

Featuring a user-friendly interface the program splits the process into three clear areas, Organise, Theme and Burn and by adopting a simple drag-and-drop method of working, even the most technology-phobic will be able to create photographic and video slideshows in no time.

Import photographs from your digital camera, or hard drive, into the 'Organise' section of the program where you can add captions and perform basic tweaks. Choose a DVD interface from any of the (often cheesy) templates in 'Theme,' where you can add transitions, music from your CD collection, frames, and pan and zoom effects.

Picture-editing tools are rudimentary and a little crude in PictureShow, so undertake any serious manipulation in Photoshop before creating a slideshow. Also supplied is Photo Explorer 8.5, which enables you to batch rename and score your pictures, create albums and print them using a selection of useful templates.

VERDICT

While not suitable for advanced users, if you want to create photo slideshows quickly and easily, CD and DVD PictureShow 4 is an affordable option. WDC

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'I have no darkroom experience as our entire thinking has always been digital...'

Markus Klinko & Indrani

Gavin Stoker gets the lowdown on creating 'bootylicious' digital portraiture from New York-based collaborators Markus Klinko and Indrani

To have one internationally successful career in your lifetime is fortunate. To have two is, well, a tad unfair. Yet Swiss-born Markus Klinko has made the unlikely leap from classical harp soloist and recording artist to globally fêted fashion photographer, whose erotically charged images of pop stars Beyoncé, Kelis, Britney Spears and Rachel Stevens adorn countless magazine covers and record sleeves.

'I guess it's dedication, tunnel vision, being slightly mad and a little bit of luck,' Markus explains of the switch. If his guardian angel wasn't already working overtime, he even met his creative and real-life partner, ex-model Indrani – who now handles the Photoshop side of things – after she guided the novice snapper through his first shoot. Unassuming in person, Markus somehow manages to say, 'I never took a single picture in my entire life until the day I decided to become a professional photographer,' with a straight face.

'I had an interest in photography more from the other side of the camera; from being photographed for album covers myself as a recording artist,' he explains. 'But 10 years ago I seriously injured my right hand, which led to a troublesome few weeks, and I decided quite abruptly to change direction. I had got a little saturated with practising 10 hours a day, re-interpreting existing material. If I had to take the same picture in the same way every day – like going on tour as a musician – I'd shoot myself in the head.'

For partner Indrani, the switch from modelling to image manipulation was the fulfilment of an ambition. 'From about six years before I met Markus I'd been doing my own photography on the side, to express myself more and for fun,' she says. 'So I've actually been doing this longer than he has, but I didn't have the confidence to do it as a career. We really grew together.'

It seems the photography market is a huge open field in which just about anyone can pick up a camera and call themselves a photographer; but it's inevitably very competitive, especially in the fashion, cosmetic and celebrity fields. 'My photography career happened in stages and jumps,' admits Markus.

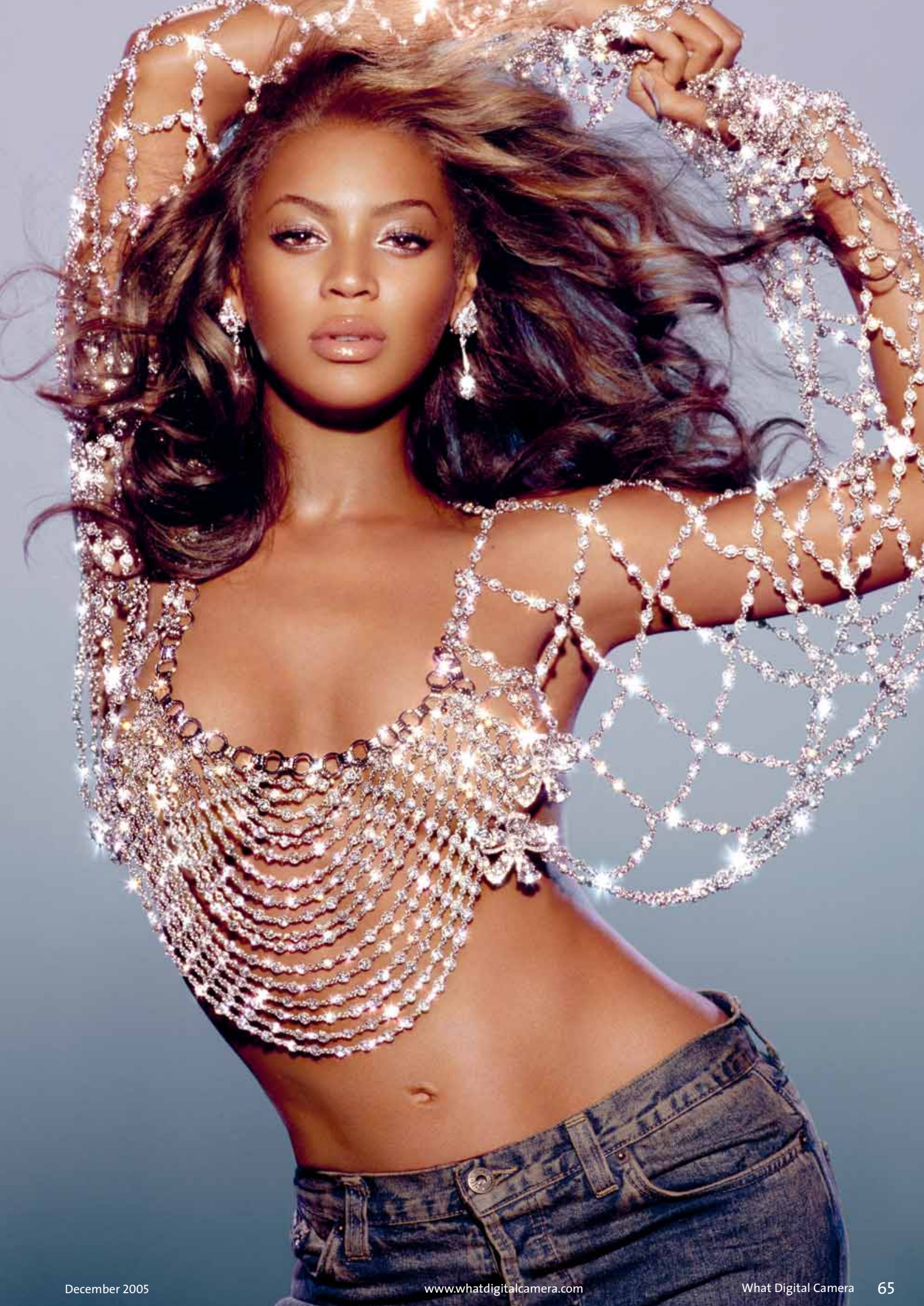
With the benefit of Indrani's collaboration, within their first

lightbox

Right: Beyoncé is so full of life and energy and a real delight to work with. She invests complete trust in us which is very rare, and which allows us to really bring out her personality

Left: A glittering portrait of US supermodel Molly Sims

Far Left: A visually striking image of singer Mariah Carey



year the pair landed magazine commissions from London and Paris and even some advertising shoots. Sponsored by a retouching house, they were also lucky enough to be introduced to digital as a nascent creative medium, and the ability to manipulate imagery from early on has sparked some of their most dramatic ideas. 'I have no darkroom experience as our entire thinking has always been digital,' Markus admits, 'though digital capture is still quite new for us as a main tool. We started using the Leaf 22-megapixel digital back a year ago, which seemed like a huge leap in quality.'

Markus needs such a high resolution for his camera because a large portion of his work is turned into billboards and posters – also, he's not always in control of how his work will be cropped.

'It is a big issue when you're asked to shoot the girl full-length, meaning they need to see the shoes and the head, and then the agency comes back to you three weeks later and says "the client's decided to run this as a head shot". Then you're dropping down from a 70MB file to a 3MB one, and they still want a billboard-sized image. So that's one of the challenges. I'm looking forward to the next generation – the 44MP chip – but that's probably two or three years off.'

I ask Markus what the secret of a great portrait is: is it about capturing the heart and soul of a person or making them sexier than they actually are

'It's a combination of the two,' he responds. 'It's about establishing a relationship in a short time and engaging the person so that they feel confident and glamorous.'

Looking at the pair's online portfolio reveals they've shot a lot of glamorous men and women, but if there's an underlying theme to their work it seems to be sex and sensuality. 'It's part of life, isn't it? What makes people tick,' Markus smiles. 'I find it an attractive quality in a woman, for sure. Indrani's looking for a more intellectual connection, whereas I'm probably looking more for a sensual one.'

'I like to see the women as sexy and strong and very much in control,' nods Indrani. 'That's something that is important to me. We don't objectify women; they are sexy but they're sexy on their own terms. I think that's a lot to do with our approach and the fact that when we shoot women in a sexy way it tends to come from them. They say to us "I want to do a sexy image". It's a very special kind of sexiness. For some reason when we shoot celebrities they tend to want to be proud and polished and strong in that way.'

Although technically Markus is the photographer and Indrani is the photo retoucher, the boundaries are sometimes blurred. Being equal creative partners, both of them pitch their ideas into the other's specialist area. This can lead to arguments. 'She also gets involved with lighting and camera angles and I will be involved with deciding on effects for post production,' Markus admits. 'We try to pre-visualise the shoot as much as possible, which also then allows us to be spontaneous because we have a secure plan of how it's going to go down as an insurance policy. We often like to work that way with advertising clients who have a very specific layout – cover the shots that are agreed on from 75 board meetings, and then try to add our vision as much as possible.'

Indrani has her own ideas about creative vision: 'We like to push the envelope and not just go for one look. But I think we've developed quite a distinctive style because of our approach. Of course it's quite an arduous process, but when we come to a conclusion we both like, it's often liked by a much broader range of people.'

lightbox

Left: Britney Spears. 'This story was entirely done with sets in the studio,' says Markus

Above: US fashion designer Kimora Lee Simmons . 'So many of our fashion images are about perfecting the physical self. They cater to the desire for transcending one's imperfections'

Right: Former S Club Seven singer Rachel Stevens, shot for Arena magazine when she launched her solo career. This picture marked such a transformation from her old image that it made the national newspapers

'Indrani will spend anything from two to three days to two to three weeks on each image'

With her role in the partnership as chief image manipulator, Indrani will spend anything from two to three days on each image to two to three weeks, sometimes more, especially if it's an advertising project on which the client changes their minds several times. 'There's often a long time spent going in different directions on images that are not really our choice,' she sighs. 'But the ability to work in a collaborative way and listen to other people's points of view is something that comes very naturally to us.'

As for the future, both say they'd like to divide their time better to allow space for personal work. 'We've been very oversaturated with assignments – crazy busy – and luckily now we're going into a phase where we can take time out to do more art gallery-orientated photography,' claims Markus. 'We'd like to sell our work as prints – it would be a wonderful balance to be 50% fine art orientated, 20% advertising and 30% fashion editorial; which really at the moment we're not.'

And what of the commissions; is there anything coming up that they're particularly excited about

'There's a bunch of personal/editorial projects which are very interesting because they're going to take us more on location, into the fields and onto the streets,' enthuses Markus. 'We're moving away from the studio where we've done the bulk of our work so far. And, especially with the new possibilities for digital capture, we ought to be out there; we've been using digital SLRs like the Fujifilm S2 Pro as 'Polaroids' for setting up the shot. Only a very few times have they been used for actual work, though it works fine for a magazine-sized picture. I really do prefer the larger set up. Your cellphone is soon going to have a bigger chip than the digital cameras of two years ago. You have to be on your toes. I hope there will remain a very high-end niche market that still uses big cameras with extensive control and movement – and I will make a huge effort to do what I can to maintain that market.'

If the pair continues churning out such arrestingly sexy images, we see no reasons why their wishes won't be indulged.

View more of Markus and Indrani's portfolio by visiting ***www.markusklinko-indrani.com*** **WDC**

gearbox

Markus shoots with a 22MP Leaf camera back; Indrani works mainly in Photoshop and uses a Fuji S2 Pro for setting up shots. 'We've used the Leaf back on different platforms,' says Markus. 'Lately I've gone back exclusively to the Fuji GX680, my all-time favourite hybrid camera – it's between large and medium format. We also have a Mamiya RZ; I'm constantly experimenting with set ups to do extreme stuff, from 50mm to 500mm.'

lightbox

Below: The model, Iman. Her husband, David Bowie has also received the Klinko and Indrani treatment

Markus and Indrani's tips for *glamorous portraits:*

1 When it comes to lighting, we do whatever is best for the situation; mix available light with flash, use very dimensional surround lighting or very classic lighting reminiscent of [painter] Rembrandt.

2 We don't objectify women; they are sexy but they're sexy on their own terms. I think that's a lot to do with our approach and the fact that when we shoot women in a sexy way it tends to come from them.

3 You have to be a bit of a diplomat at times with certain people, depending on their point of view and how they see themselves. If they have an extremely strong self-image that they want to convey that's very exciting, or if they come as a blank canvas then it's fascinating to try to figure out what they're about and bring that out.

4 We both have some very opposite points of view and see things differently. A big part of our strength is that we communicate very effectively and blend the elements that we both like about something.

E-ssential Viewing

Olympus's E-*500* offers cutting-edge technology to suit all your needs

From the groundbreaking OM system of the 1970s to the futuristic IS range of auto-focus SLRs, Olympus is not afraid to break with tradition and challenge the photographic mainstream. As the new Olympus E-500 proves, this innovation and forward-thinking is just as valid in the age of digital imaging as it has been throughout the company's history.

The E-500 is the latest addition to the celebrated Olympus E-System, itself based on the FourThirds digital SLR standard. Developed from scratch, the FourThirds standard is the only cross-manufacturer platform to address the fundamental demands of digital SLR photography to deliver one thing – the high quality that the discerning enthusiast photographer demands.

With an eight-million-pixel full frame transfer CCD at the heart of its compact and ergonomic body, the Olympus E-500 has the resolution and features to match all experience levels – from novice to pro. If you've never used a digital SLR before, a choice of 21 pre-defined scene modes will have you taking professional-quality photographs in minutes, while the seasoned snapper can assume full manual control to explore new levels of imaging excellence.

The E-500's new, 49-area ESP metering pattern ensures exposure accuracy under the widest-ranging conditions, and for the most challenging situations Olympus has incorporated its unique highlight and shadow spot metering modes – previously reserved for the company's classic professional SLR, the OM4Ti.

To help you get precisely the images you want, a unique pre-shot preview lets you see the picture – and its RGB histogram – before recording it onto your CompactFlash, Microdrive or xD-PictureCard media.

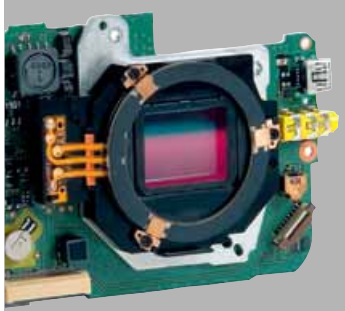
On playback, a high-resolution 2.5inch Hypercrystal LCD screen (the largest seen on a DSLR) makes sure that no matter how bright it is, or how much of an angle you are viewing it at, your digital memories look as good in camera as they do in reality.

Indeed, with 2 colour spaces, 3 colour modes and 9 black and white settings the E-500 is a camera that will truly deliver the look and feel you are after. And if you need to get back to your favourite settings in a hurry just press the MyMode button and the E-500 will immediately take you there.

Of course, the cutting-edge technology offered by the E-500 would be nothing without lenses to match, which is why the camera supports the full range of high performance Zuiko E-System optics, covering focal length equivalents from 14-600mm. For the first-time E-System buyer, the E-500 double-lens kit makes an excellent starting point, with 14-45mm and 40-150mm zoom lenses included in the box. As focal lengths are effectively doubled on FourThirds system cameras, this gives you a massive 28-300mm equivalent focal length range – in only two lenses, and for less than £700. Such is Olympus' belief in the longevity of the E-500 it comes with a 24-month warranty, which can be extended to 30 months when you join the elite E Club. Membership is free for the first year.

To find out more about the E-500 visit **www.olympus.co.uk** or call **0800 0720070**.

Dust prevention & removal system



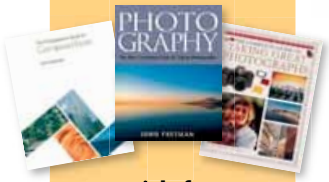
As many photographers have painfully discovered, digital SLRs and dust simply don't mix. In its uncompromising quest for the optimum image quality, Olympus has tackled the problem head-on with its Supersonic Wave Filter system. Dust entering the E-500's body is trapped on a filter in front of the sensor, which is vibrated by a 'Supersonic wave'. The 35,000 vibrations per second the wave produces easily 'shakes' dust from the sensor.

Olympus is the only manufacturer to offer a built-in dust prevention and removal system, and E-System cameras are the only digital SLRs that feature it.

FourThirds OLYMPUS E-SYSTEM OLYMPUS Your Vision, Our Future

john freeman

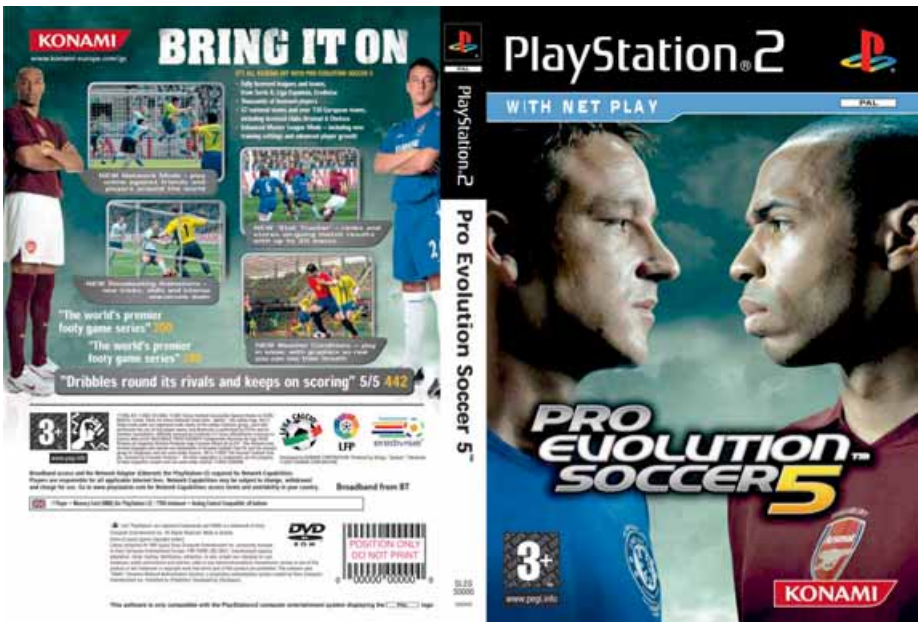
John Freeman is one of the UK's top pro photographers
His clients include some of the country's biggest companies. He has illustrated well over 100 books, covering subjects as diverse as cookery, health, travel and home interiors. He has also sold over a milion copies of his glossy photography manuals, of which he has written more than a dozen. John also sells fine art photography from his own gallery in London's prestigious Oxo Tower. He is fully digital, and mainly uses a Canon EOS 1DS SLR with a variety of lenses.



www.johnfreeman-photographer.com

Shooting Stars

John Freeman explains how he planned the billboard advertising for the new PlayStation game



Top and Above: Pro Evolution Soccer 5 is available for PlayStation 2, Xbox and PC-DVD, RRP £29.99. A PSP version will be released in November

Every so often I get commissioned to go to a country that I have never been to but always wanted to visit, or I get to photograph someone who has been a long-time hero of mine. So imagine my delight, as a lifelong Arsenal supporter, when I get commissioned to shoot Thierry Henry! The shoot was for Konami's new PlayStation 2 Pro Evolution Soccer 5 game which features Thierry Henry and John Terry of Chelsea. Not only do I get to meet Thierry, but also the captain of our great London rivals, John Terry.

From my initial meeting with the art director I was able to plan exactly what shots were required and what was needed in the way of equipment and lighting as well as studio size and location. The main shot was to be of the two players facing one another head to head. This would be for the DVD box and billboard advertising. Some of these billboards would be up to 96 sheet size, which is as big as you can get! Because of this I decided I would use the Hasselblad with a Phaseone P25 back. This has a full-frame 6x4.5 sensor delivering a staggering 25MP! I feel that this quality now surpasses anything that film has to offer. On top of that there was one slight problem that shooting digitally would solve. The two protagonists had to be shot on separate days. This might not seem too difficult but if the eye line of one of them is out by just a fraction of a millimetre, it would make the final

'As I was working with the camera tethered, it was great to see the shots come up on screen immediately'

shot unacceptable. Having shot John Terry on the first day it meant that he could be downloaded onto the computer. When it came to shooting Thierry, we could see instantly if I had him in the correct position and with the right eye line. Had I been shooting on film such accuracy would have been virtually impossible and even shooting Polaroids would have involved a delay in shot to image. To help each player get the right line I had one of my assistants, James, who at 6'2" is exactly the same height as both of them, stand in.

The studio I shot them in was 2,500 sq ft, which might seem excessive but throughout the shoot there were sometimes as many as 20 to 30 people present. Anything smaller would have made for an uncomfortable shoot with people getting in the way or making the two players feel self conscious. Another consideration was the space I like to work in and the distance that the various lights are placed in relationship to one another and the background and shooting position. So with the players positioned 20' from the background and using a 150mm lens meant that I was about 12' from them. With about another 15' behind me it's easy to work out that a comfortable working distance is a good 40 to 50ft. On top of this we needed an area for the computer work station to be set up, together with another for the art director and designer. Another area had the PlayStation set up with the game. Together with all the people who needed to feel comfortable I've noticed, from past experience, that however much space you have, it quickly gets used.

With forward planning the shoot went relatively smoothly. We had already set up the basic lighting position and worked out exposure using James as the stand in. This meant that for the actual shoot all we had to do was tweak the lights and exposure. Both players had a fantastic grasp of what I wanted to achieve in terms of expression and attitude and were as professional in the studio as they are on the park. It was great when we were off camera to talk about the game and the new season. What really came across was the phenomenal respect they both had for one another. As I was working with the camera tethered it was great to see the shots coming up on screen immediately. It also helped when it was time for the players to take direction as they could see first hand what I wanted changing.

Whatever equipment you use, things can go wrong, but working digitally reduces the risk greatly. The immediacy of seeing images straight away is a fantastic advantage when it comes to creating the required shot. With the thousands of pounds invested in this campaign, let alone the players' time, I slept a lot easier at the end of each day than I would have if I had had to shoot the whole thing on film. **WDC**

John's lighting

To light the players I used my Broncolor Grafit A4 packs and heads. They needed to be shot against a white background and I had two Pulsoflex EM 80 x 140 softboxes fitted to two Grafit heads. These were directed against the background at about 45° in a totally symmetrical way. This meant that the background was completely evenly lit without any hot spots or flare. The main light was mounted on a stand and I used a soft light reflector fitted with a honeycomb. The honeycomb makes a more directional light than the soft light by itself and I find it much more controllable. Instead of using a second light as a 'fill' I used a series of reflectors to bounce back light into the shadow areas of the face. Finally I had a small EM 20 x 20 softbox mounted on a boom coming from behind and giving just the right amount of hair light. Obviously, the position of these lights – except the background ones – was reversed for Thierry, as he was facing in the opposite direction.

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These adapters allow Metz digital flashguns to communicate with various digital TTL systems, for example, Canon's E-TTL and E-TTL II, Nikon's D-TTL and i-TTL, and Konica-Minolta's ADI.

Metz also manufactures digital flash units dedicated for single camera makes, for those who do not need to have the versatility of the SCA 3002 system.

Both the **Metz 54 AF-1 digital** and **Metz 44 AF-4i digital** are available in versions for Canon, Nikon and Konica-Minolta, functioning with E-TTL, i-TTL and ADI systems, as well as their predecessors. These flashguns offer a high specification with exceptional value.

The **Metz 28 AF-3 digital** is a dedicated flashgun for Canon, Nikon and Konica-Minolta, and also for Olympus Digital. Its front view is about the size of a credit card, but it still packs a whopping guide number of 28 (meters at 100 ISO with the 85mm attachment).

Many smaller compact digital cameras have no shoe to connect an external flash, so the **Metz 28 CS-2 digital** is attached via a bracket and is triggered by the camera's own built in flash, learning when you initially set it up whether or not the camera produces pre-flashes so that it knows when to fire. It is not a dedicated flash – it controls its own output automatically. If necessary, exposure corrections can then be made by simply pressing the +/- buttons before re-shooting. The Metz 28 CS-2 is very easy to use and will extend the range of nearly all compact digital cameras.

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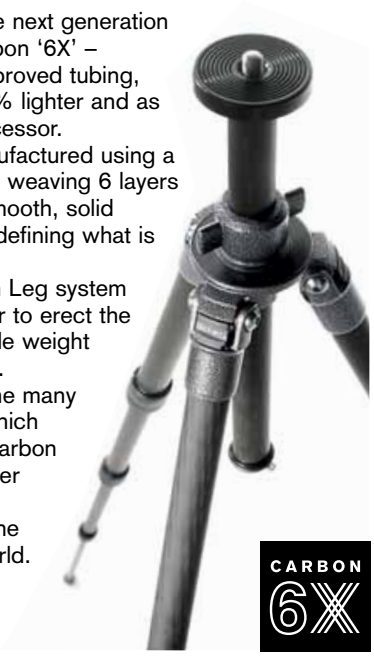

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A2, Brutus?

From: Alan Rex
Subject: KonicaMinolta A2

Q I'm new to digital photography and the A2 has been recommended to me. Can you tell me why I couldn't find one advert for it in your magazine? I was hoping to buy it cheaper than the recommended price, but I only found one cheap supplier on the Internet.

A *The A2 has been discontinued, which is why you can't find many ads for it. You may want to consider its replacement, the Konica Minolta A200, which is an 8MP camera with a 28-200mm lens. It doesn't quite have the build quality of the A2, but the anti-shake technology, image quality and optics all impressed us: we gave it a score of 88%.* ***HB***

Which One?

From: Marco Migliore
Subject: Sony V3 vs Olympus

Q I can't afford a DSLR, but I'd like a camera that allows manual control and won't be obsolete in six months. I've narrowed my choice to the Sony Cybershot V3 or the Olympus Camedia C7070. One sales assistant told me that Sony stopped making the V3 but Sony said they hadn't, though it may be discontinued soon. I was about to buy the V3, but if it's discontinued will I struggle to find parts or accessories?

A *Both are superb cameras with a wide range of features, including 7MP sensors and 4x optical zoom lenses, although the Olympus has a more wideangle 27-100mm lens in comparison to the 34-136mm of the Sony. In our reviews the Sony scored 87% and the Olympus 86%. We felt that the Olympus has the edge on image quality, but the Sony is smaller. As for obsolescence, all cameras are replaced every few months, including the Olympus, but parts will still be available for many years, and most accessories fit more than just one camera so this shouldn't be an issue.* ***HB***

Tele choice

From: Steve Berg
Subject: Superzoom Dilemma

Q I am trying to upgrade to digital. I started off on the DSLR route, then came across the Samsung PRO 815, but it either doesn't seem to exist, or does but has no Image Stabilization (depending who you talk to). At 420mm it's asking rather a lot to avoid camera shake. I then discovered the Panasonic FZ30 – only a 12x zoom and a postage stamp size screen, and the general view seems to be that it's too noisy. This is bad because I mainly photograph landscapes and make quite large prints. Finally I found the Sony R1 – looks great, loads of megapixels but a weedy max zoom. The other problem is that I can't find reviews on the Samsung and Sony cameras.

A *The Samsung Pro815 hasn't yet hit the shops, and we're still waiting for a review sample. Ditto the Sony R1. The Pro815 doesn't feature an image stabilizer, instead a High Speed mode adjusts the sensitivity and shutter speed. But as we haven't tested the camera yet, we can't comment on its performance. You say that the Panasonic FZ30 'only' has a 12x zoom. In fact this camera's 35-420mm range is in the upper echelons for digital cameras – the Samsung Pro815 has a 28-420mm lens. Sony's equivalent model is the H1, which has a 36-432mm lens (all 35mm equivalent.)*
Yes, the FZ30 is a bit noisy at ISO 200, but it's still one of the best cameras of its type, and Photoshop CS2 now supports RAW files from the FZ30, enabling you to counter this using the noise-reduction feature.
A couple of questions though. As a landscape shooter, surely a good wideangle is more important than a long telephoto? And if image quality is so important for your big prints then why did you abandon the DSLR route? None of these fixed lens cameras can hold a candle to an SLR for ultimate image quality, as their sensors are so much smaller. For more information read the group tests in our Buyers Guide supplement. ***HB***

Top Tips

MAKE YOUR LENS WEAR A HOODIE
Use a lens hood when shooting outdoors. It will improve image contrast and colour saturation, and reduce the risk of flare

jpg settings

From: Brian Wright
Subject: Compression issues

Q I've just bought a 5MP Nikon 5900 and I'm disappointed with the pixelised edges and poor definition when enlarging the pictures. I decided to compare the file sizes with those from my 3MP Minolta D303 and I found that the Minolta's 3MP files are, like for like, twice the Nikon file sizes.

Can you explain the definition of the JPEG compression settings of Superfine, Fine and Normal? Do they conform to some international standard? Surely if the manufacturer quotes a compression setting then this should conform to similar compression settings in other cameras. If it does not then the whole system is useless and a misrepresentation of the JPEG standards.

A *There is no agreed standard for JPEG compression rates in digital cameras. They're really too complex and varied. Besides, one of the attractions of losslessly compressible JPEG is the fact that you can fine-tune the compression rate to suit your needs. In-camera sharpening makes an important contribution to the final result too. That your old Minolta's best quality 3MP images are larger than your new Nikon's 5MP best quality image files points to two things; the CoolPix 5900 uses more JPEG compression than the Minolta and it doesn't sharpen its images much. Reviews of the 5900 tend to confirm this. You can try switching from the camera's auto-sharpen mode in the menus to a higher manual sharpening level and see if that helps, or sharpen them on the PC, though use restraint.* ***IB***

Top Tips

LOW-LIGHT LENS CHOICE
If you regularly shoot in poor light, consider buying a fixed-focal-length standard lens: they're usually made with a wider maximum aperture than all but the most expensive (and heavy) zooms. The standard lens will probably give better definition than your zoom lenses too

Digital Surgery

What's wrong with this picture? Martin formulates his diagnosis and nurses it back to health

Seagull Frenzy

By Peter Chamberlin
Camera Agfa CL30 CLICK

before

Martin's date remedy

'This was taken with a 1MP Agfa CL30 Click, on Fish Hoek beach, near Cape Town, South Africa. I increased the contrast a little. The gulls were hovering over a plate of chips placed on the sea wall. I've just ordered a Nikon 8800, so now will be getting down to serious digi works!

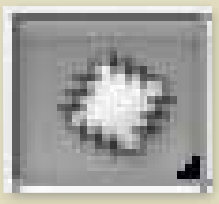
Martin says: The presence of lots of gulls makes for a great photo opportunity (though the plate of chips on the wall below has obviously helped). This photograph has potential but it is spoiled by the presence of the handrail in the foreground and even more so by the date stamp. Date stamps were useful in the days of print film, but if shooting digitally you don't need to include a visible date stamp as the date and time information is always stored in the image file metadata. So let's look at how we can remove both of these items using Adobe Photoshop 7.0 or later.

here's how

step 1 marquee and patch

I selected the rectangular marquee tool and drew a marquee around the number 21 and then selected the patch tool set to Source mode with the transparent box unchecked. I moused down inside the selection and dragged the selection to the left to sample a new piece of sand and then let go of the mouse. This mended the image and seamlessly repaired this first portion of the image. I then repeated the same steps again to repair the rest of the date stamp (if you are using Photoshop CS or later, the original selection area will show a preview of the repair).

step 2 select handrail



Next, I tackled the handrail. I used the patch tool this time to draw a lasso-type selection around the handrail with the seagull. Again, I moused-down inside the selection and dragged to select an empty portion of the beach and let go. The patch tool seamlessly repaired the area inside the original selection. The patch tool will sometimes give you great results first time, but you may often need to select the healing brush afterwards and make a few extra repairs to tidy up the edges.

after

Jargon *Buster*

Everything you need to know about image-editing, but in an alphabetical order. This month we continue with B

B *is for...*

BACKGROUND LAYER
An image that has not been converted to a layer in Photoshop. An image can only have one background layer, no other layers can be dragged below it.

BATCH COMMAND
A command that allows you to apply a set of recorded actions to a folder of images. The chosen action will affect all the images in that folder automatically.

BEVELS
This is a layer effect that creates a raised 3D-like surface to the chosen layer.

BEZIER CURVE
Using the Pen tool, the curve is created by clicking and dragging the pen between points. Bezier curves have handles that allow you to control the strength of the arch.

BITMAP
A raster graphics image, digital image, or bitmap, is a data file or structure representing a generally rectangular grid of pixels, or points of color, on a computer monitor, paper, or other display device. The colour of each pixel is individually defined; images in the RGB color space, for instance, often consist of coloured pixels defined by three bytes – one byte each for red, green and blue.

BLEND MODES
These modes are found in the Layer palette. The chosen layer's pixels are blended with other layers in a variety of ways.

BLUR FILTERS
Photoshop contains an array of different blur filters. Pixels are blended together to cteate a soft effect. Blur filters can be used to create a shallow depth of field or even add movement with the Motion blur filter.

Blur filters can add movement

BRIDGE
Adobe Photoshop CS2's brand new feature that allows for improved browsing of your images and other files.

BRIGHTNESS AND CONTRAST
This mode allows you to make basic adjustments to your image's brightness and contrast by the use of sliders.

BRUSHES AND BRUSH PRESETS
They act like real paint brushes and can even be made to work like an airbrush. There are lots of tools in Photoshop that are brush based, like the Clone tool or the Dodge and Burn tools.

TFT = BAD

From: Tony Robbins
Subject: Wot, no viewfinder?

Q Why, apart from cost, are manufacturers removing the optical viewfinder from many new cameras? I defy anyone to see the view from any TFT in bright sunshine.

A *Because people aren't using the viewfinder; and by dropping them, the LCD screens can be made bigger. LCDs vary in quality; the best ones perform well in bright conditions.* ***IB***

Not very PC

From: Stuart Moreland
Subject: Studio flash with D50

Q I'm looking at buying a Nikon D50 but it doesn't have a PC sync socket. Does this mean I couldn't use it with studio flash?

A *No. Like all SLRs the D50 has a hotshoe, to which studio flash sync leads can be connected via an inexpensive adaptor (under £10). This works just as well but isn't quite as convenient as having a PC sync socket.* ***NA***

Ask Adobe

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Terry is also the author of Iridius Actions, a CD collection of over 90 production and creative actions for Photoshop designed to streamline and automate common tasks. For more details visit ***www.photoshop4photographers.co.uk***

Confused by **Adobe Bridge**

From: Michael Shelton

Q I'm using Adobe Bridge to organise my files, allowing Bridge to create image previews and manually rotating images to their correct orientation. However, I have noticed that when I move the images to another computer or if I burn a CD with the images on, I lose the previews and the rotations when viewed on another computer. Why?

A *Bridge, by default, uses a Centralised Cache file (like previous versions of the File Browser), storing Thumbnail and Metadata cache data in a folder on your computer in your operating system. This means that when you move the image folder/CD to another computer they cannot find the stored cache information and the process needs to be repeated. There are two solutions: if you want to use the default Centralised Cache, then before moving the images you must choose* ***Tools > Cache > Export Cache****. This will store all cached data for the images in the same folder allowing the directory to be moved to another computer. Alternatively, Adobe Bridge has a new option in the Preferences which builds a distributed cache storing all cached data with the images when possible. To use this option, open Bridge Preferences. Click on the Advanced option and in Cache field select Use Distributed Cache Files When Possible. Click OK. Now, Bridge will automatically store cached data with files in individual folders.*

Exposure **Issues**

From: Neil Fyffield

Q I photograph yachts in the Mediterranean and often find that when working indoors, the sunlight from the windows cause big exposure issues. I have tried capturing different exposures and combining them with Photshop, adopting layering techniques, but I am confused by this method. Can you help

A *Without worrying too much about technique, Photoshop CS2 and Bridge might offer a solution. A new feature of the latest upgrade is the Merge To HDR command, where HDR is High Dynamic Range. This tool allows you to capture multiple images of the same scene altering only the exposure of each shot. It is important that you do not change the ISO or Aperture values otherwise you may be disappointed with the results. Also, do not use the camera's AEB feature as the changes in exposure are normally too small. Begin with a minimum of five shots of the same scene and in Bridge, choose* ***Tools > Photoshop > Merge to HDR****. Photoshop uses the Cameras Response Curves to create a new 32-bit image with all the HDR data. You can fine-tune the white point, adjusting the exposure to suit your own requirements. When satisfied, Click OK.*

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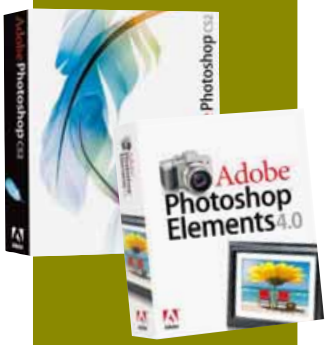

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Winner December 2005

Shaftesbury

By Stephen Felce
Camera Canon T90

'Many must also have shot this familiar beauty spot in Devon. I cloned out distractions on the left, straightened the left wall, and changed the creamy cottage to blue (the original looked sad against the white cottage two doors down). Next I filled in the bald sky, and sharpened the out-of focus wall on the left and the bush where, after lightening it under the rail, it appeared blurred. After two years of digital manipulation and printing, I feel I'm getting good results. My original scans are not always good enough, but now I use moderate manipulation when scanning to preserve information in the file saved.'

Martin says: Does this photo look retouched? At first sight it looks as if only the colours were altered to give the picture a nostalgic look. But Stephen has displayed a fine grasp of Photoshop Elements. He has expertly removed lots of small distracting elements in the original (which was supplied) to produce the finished photo here. His retouching is so good, even I can't tell which parts he changed without comparing it with the original!

Sand Dune

By Paul Nuttall
Camera Minolta Dynax 7i

'Kite flying on a sand dune in South Africa. The photo was filtered using Photoshop 7 and imported plug-ins from Flamingpear.com (free download). I left the cars in for perspective.'

Martin says: Creative filters such as the Flaming Pear series are great fun, but you can go too far and ruin an otherwise good photo. Here, I feel Paul has done just that. There's a hint of solarisation on the dunes, a crescent-shaped glow in the sky, a mono conversion applied to the foreground and a global hue colour shift. The picture would look much better with the sky blue again.

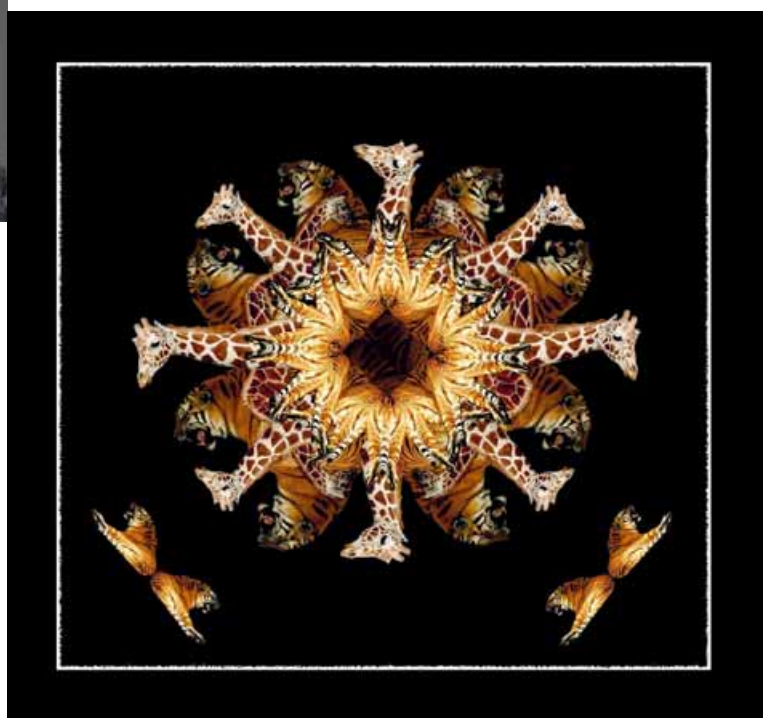
Runner Up
December 2005

Little Mia

By Jan Fialkowski
Camera Canon EOS 10D

'The shots are of Mia with her Dad, William. I don't have an extensive digital outfit but I do have a Canon EOS 10D with a 17-40mm f4 L Series and a 50mm f1.4. I am astounded by the high-quality images from the f1.4 50mm. They are brilliant. The shots were taken using available light from an eastward-facing window in the early evening. Shutter speed was 1/60 - 1/90sec at f2.8 - f4 @ 400 ISO. OK, there is 'noise' in the shadows but, for me, grabbing the shot wanted always comes before getting finer detail and less noise. I converted some shots to black and white, which are these.'

Martin says: There are several reasons why I like this photograph. First, Jan made good use of just the available light to achieve an interesting balance of lighting contrast on Mia's face along with a nice softness on her dad, William, and the way she is looking away from the camera is also quite sweet. I also shortlisted the single portrait of Mia, because in it the natural lighting works so well on her face, but in this image of her with her Dad, the overall combination of the lighting, the use of black and white, the pose and composition works beautifully.



Natural Kaleidoscope

By Morgan Heim **Camera** Canon EOS 20D

'Images are composites developed from the major plant and animal groups. The main components were selected from base images, resized, rotated, and combined over a black background using layers.'

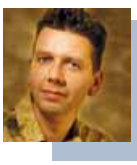
Martin says: Unfortunately, this intriguingly complex image is too small for me to fully appreciate the intricate detail. Morgan has made very neat cut-outs of the giraffe and tiger and constructed the kaleidoscope composition on several layers. This image would look powerful enough without the extra tigers at the bottom corners and the white keyline. Apart from these minor criticisms, this is excellent work.

Spiders' Nest

By Dave Prosser
Camera Kyocera M410R

'I found this spiders' nest in the garden, and as I went to take the shot they started to scatter. Using the quick shooting speed of the Kyocera, I got this shot on the Macro setting.'

Martin says: This is quite a remarkable image. I don't think I have ever seen a spiders' nest before – there must be at least a couple of hundred tiny spiders in this shot. I think Dave was fortunate to have his camera to hand and been quick enough to capture the spiders before they had all fled. However, he was less fortunate in that there was not enough time to allow him to shoot more pictures with a slightly smaller aperture. Doing so would have helped increase the depth of field.



Martin Evening

Photographer and Photoshop guru

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For more about Martin visit his website at: ww.martinevening.com

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The Photoshop Project

Create a...

Original Images: Nigel Atherton

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Steve Crabb

Originally from the Isle of Wight, Steve holds a diploma in photography and has worked in design for 20 years. A Photoshop artist for clients including Body Shop and the FA, he is also an author and magazine contributor.

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2006 Calendar

the brief

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Looking to do something special with your photos this holiday season? **Steve Crabb** shows you how to make a personalised calendar

A personalised calendar can be a great way of using a selection of your most treasured photos and giving them a new twist. Whether your images are of family or friends or your favourite landscapes, they can all be used to make an inexpensive but thoughtful gift that will be used every day of the year.

The first and most important stage in creating a calendar is choosing the right images.

You may decide on a theme, perhaps one person or a pet. Look for as many images as you can to see if you can make a group of twelve, one for each month. Don't worry if you can't find twelve, as you can make the calendar bi-monthly or even quarterly.

In this project, we will concentrate on creating a twelve-month calendar, with one month per image.

When you have found the images you want to use, the next step is to decide the format of the calendar – portrait or landscape. This may determine the orientation of the images that you choose for the calendar (unless you plan to use them small, within each page). In this project we will make a portrait calendar, using big, full-bleed images (no borders). If you have landscape-format images that you would like to use, then consider cropping them to portrait format.

When you have all your images together, decide which of your photos will be for January, February and

Follow the step-by-steps next page to create this great project

so on. It really is entirely up to you how you do this – not all calendars have obvious seasonal images for the corresponding months, and you can use any image in any month.

As with all personalised gifts, they are tailor made to your requirements, so calendars are no exception; where to put the days and dates is up to you, but the less it obstructs the image, the better. With a lot of calendars, the dates stay in the same area throughout, so you may want to follow this approach as you continue.

FINISHING TOUCHES

When you have completed the calendar images and have printed them out, take some time to decide on how best to present it. There are plenty of ways to hang it or stand it up. For a quick and inexpensive method, you could use a big chunky bulldog clip, or you could use a hole punched through the entire set of prints and bind them together with a ribbon. The best and more professional way of presenting a hanging calendar is by binding it, using a professional binding service.

You can of course just let the pros do it all for you: all you need to do is upload your untouched images direct to the website, onto their calendar templates, and they will in turn, print out, bind and send back your completed calendar. Costs start at around £15 to £20.

Here are some useful websites for calendar printing:
www.photobox.co.uk;
www.kodakgallery.co.uk;
www.snapfish.co.uk;
www.jessopsphotoexpress.com

WDC

step 1 new template

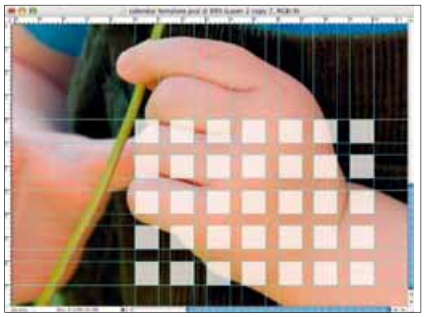
Frst, create a new Photoshop document that is A4 in size and at least 150ppi resolution. Choose **File > New** and select dimensions of 210mm wide by 297mm high (which is A4 size). Save this document and name it 'calendar template'. We will reuse this document for each month.

step 2 first image

Open your first image and select the entire image: choose **Select > All**. Now copy and paste it into your template by choosing **Edit > Copy**, selecting your new template image and choosing **Edit > Paste**. You may have to resize the image to fit the template. To do this, choose **Edit > Free Transform** and drag the handles of the bounding box down to a suitable size.

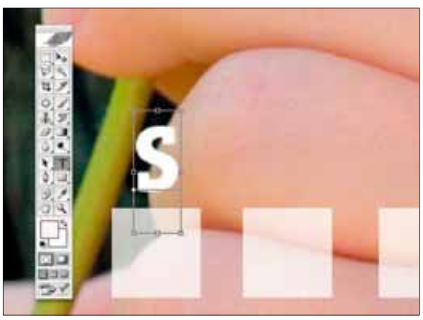
step 3 create grid

Drag guides onto the image to create a box 10x7cm. Drag guides to make a grid of 1cm squares spaced 0.5cm. Create a new layer and call it 'Date Squares'. With the Marquee tool, click and drag inside the first square guide to create a 1cm square. Ensure white is selected in the colour palette and fill inside the selection (**Edit > Fill > Foreground**). Reduce opacity to 75%. Repeat with all squares.



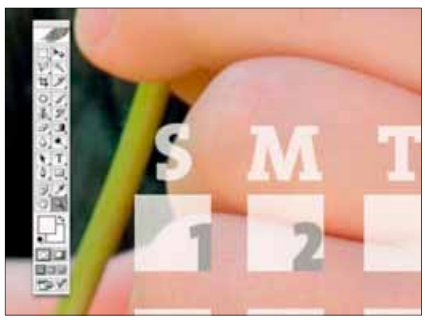
step 4 type tool

Now select the Type tool and click above the first white square. Enter the letter S to indicate the day Sunday. Make sure the colour is set to white. Use the transform tool to resize the letter to a suitable size. Reduce the opacity down to 75%.To make sure that all the remaining letters are uniform, copy the layer, choose **Layer > Duplicate Layer** and drag it to the right, select the Type tool and highlight the letter. Enter the new letter M. Repeat this for the remaining letters.



step 5 make a date

Select the Type tool again and click on the first white square. Enter the number 1 and ensure the colour of the type is set to grey. Resize the number down to fit into the bottom right corner of the square, remembering that you must be able to fit in wide numbers like 22. Reduce opacity to 75%. For consistency, duplicate the layer (rename the layer with the corresponding number) and move the number to the next square, placing it in the same position. Repeat with the other numbers.



step 6 add the month

Now you have all the squares with days and dates, so simply select the Type tool again and type the name of the month. Make this a larger size than you've made the numbers and place it in your desired position. It may also be worth adding the year too. Once again, reduce the opacity down to 75%. Remember to perform a final **SAVE**.

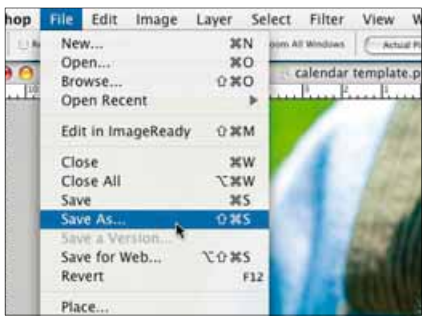
Print them out

See your image with a print preview
print > print with preview

When you have completed your calendar project, you will need to print the pages out. Most inkjet printers are now capable of borderless printing, which will give a more professional edge to the finished result. As the calendar images are set to A4 in size, there should be little difficulty in setting the print options. Select **Print with Preview** from the print options in Photoshop; from here you can get an accurate idea of how your image will look on the page. If your printer is not borderless, then perhaps you can invest in an art knife and a metal ruler and trim the edges.

step 7 save as command

Now you have completed the first month in this calendar project, the bulk of the hard work is done. You have all the elements in place to produce the remaining months relatively quickly. To keep the January image and be able to continue to work on the template, choose **Edit > Save As** and rename the document January 2006. You can then go back to the template document and add the new image for February.



step 8 re-use template

The template document has many text layers, all of which can be edited. When you come to altering the numbers for the dates, select the Type tool and click over the number to highlight it, and then enter the new number. Follow the earlier steps to move dates onto other white boxes.

step 9 flatten and save

It is a good idea, when you are happy with each finished month, to flatten the image so that the file size is reduced. In order to do this, choose **Layer > Flatten Image**. Automatically, you'll find that all the layers will collapse into one single image, making the document non-editable.

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Top Tips to Change your life!

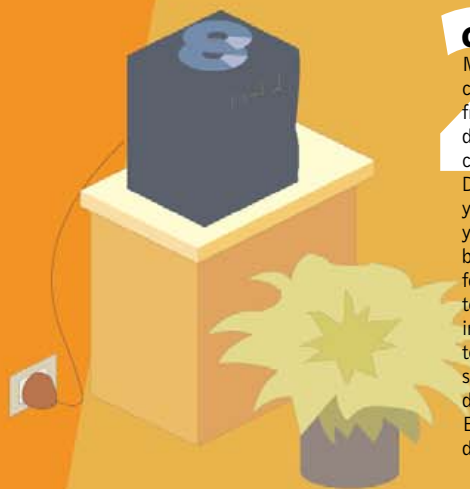
WDC expert **Philip Andrews** lists twenty of the best Photoshop Elements cheats and in the process transforms your humdrum life into an image-editing success

Change your life!? Okay so it's a big task but for some people, being able to use a bunch of professional editing and management features via a simple, easy-to-use interface, is a life-changing experience. That is exactly what the guys at Adobe try to do with their entry-level photo-editing package – Photoshop Elements.

Now in its fourth revision, you will find more 'power with ease' features jammed into this 'econo' package than ever before. So in this issue we thought that we would get Philip Andrews to list 20 of the best cheats and show you how they can help your photo-editing in a jiffy.

1 TURNING THE STRAIGHTEN TOOL ON ITS SIDE

So you think the Straighten tool in Elements 4.0 is a cool new addition to your editing arsenal. Well why not? Being able to reorientate crooked horizons by drawing a straight line along the demarcation point between sky and ground is a simple solution to correcting photos that have been taken slightly askew, but the real power cheat is the way the feature can be used to straighten vertical picture parts. Choose the Straighten tool, then hold down the Ctrl key while drawing a line (click-drag the mouse) alongside a part of the photo that should be vertical. Release the mouse button then the Ctrl key, and the photo is automatically rotated to the precise degree. All that is left to do is crop out the edge detail.

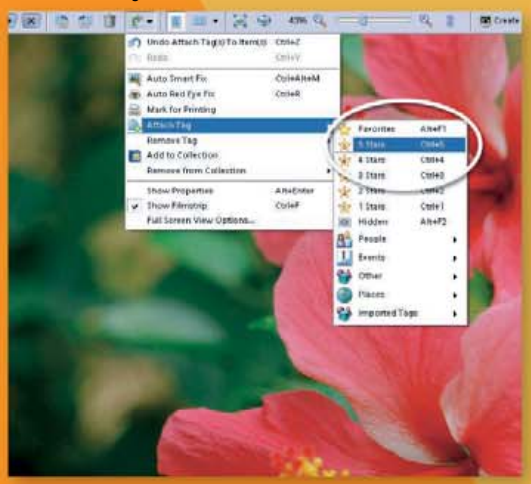


2 OFFLINE STORAGE

Most Elements users create their catalogues (the thumbnail collections that you see in the Photo Browser workspace) from folders of images stored on their hard drives, or directly from their camera downloads. But the program can also generate catalogues from pictures stored on CD or DVD disks. When you **File > Get Photos** from your disk you have an option at the bottom of the dialogue that lets you keep the original pictures 'offline' (on the CD or DVD) but load proxy versions of the photos into Elements to use for browsing, searching, tagging and organising. If you try to make changes to the photo itself, Elements asks you to insert the original disk so that the program can apply edits to the full version of the file. Offline files are indicated with a small CD disk icon in the top corner of the thumbnail. If you don't select the Offline option in the Get Photos dialogue, Elements will copy the photos from your disk to the hard drive, then create a catalogue from this collection of files.

3 SELECTING FAVOURITES IN FULL SCREEN MODE

Anyone who has played with the View Photos in Full Screen option (select thumbnails in the Photo Browser workspace and then press F11) in Elements knows that this feature produces a quick slideshow displaying each photo in turn according to the settings that you make in the initial pop-up dialogue. What is not generally known is that, with a few quick keystrokes, you can add star ratings to your pictures while they are being progressively shown on screen. Ctrl plus numbers 1 to 5 attach 1 to 5 star ratings, with Alt F1 adding a Favorites tag and Alt F2 hiding the thumbnail altogether. These keystrokes ratings system makes the Full Screen mode a great way to edit the images from a recent shoot.



Above: Add star ratings to your pictures in Full Screen mode while editing a recent shoot

4 PAINT YOUR WAY TO PRECISE SELECTIONS

So what does 10 years of Photoshop practice get you? Well one thing is for sure, I can now make complex selections using the Lasso, Marquee and Magic Wand tools and a variety of 'add to', 'subtract from' and 'intersect with' actions with comparative ease. So you can imagine my surprise to find that Elements users can create equally as complex selections in seconds using naught but a few scribbles. Using the Selection Brush tool, you can create a selection by simply painting over the areas of the picture that you want included. To remove areas from the selection just hold down the Alt key and paint again.

5 INSTANT WARMTH

NEW TO ELEMENTS 4.0

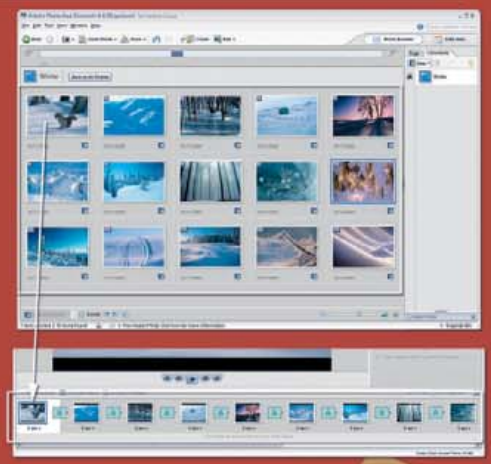
Create an instant sense of warmth to photos that are suffering from being too blue because they were taken on an overcast day, by employing the powers of the Adjust Color for Skin Tone feature. This will switch the cold feeling of the photo to one that is more reminiscent of hot, balmy afternoons.

6 ADD CAPTIONS TO MULTIPLE PHOTOS

You can add the same caption to multiple photos quickly and easily by multi-selecting the thumbnails in the Photo browser first and then selecting the Add Captions to Selected Items option from the right-click menu.

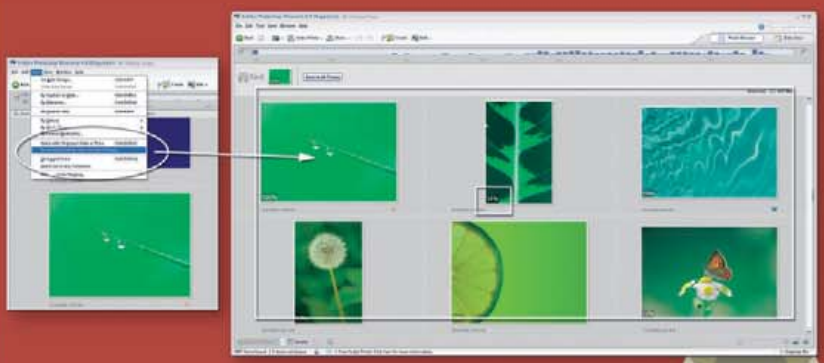
USE COLLECTIONS FOR *FAST SLIDE SHOWS*

Many people think of the Collections feature in Elements as another way of adding tags or labels to selected images. And in many respects this is true. Collections are another way of grouping photos with a similar theme, but the images that sit within a collection also have another property – they can be sequenced. Next time you double click on a Collections entry to display the images contained in the collection, notice that each is numbered (top left hand corner). Individual photos can be moved to a new location by simply click-dragging the thumbnail. Pre-ordering the pictures in a collection is a great speed cheat for making fast slide shows, as the sequence in the collection is reflected in the slide show editor.



PIXEL-BASED *SEARCHES*

The ability to search a series of pictures by filename, date taken or even some obscure metadata entry is nothing special. Many editing and management programs can do that. But what about searches based on dominant pixel colours? The Photo Browser **Find > By Visual Similarity with Selected Photos** option does precisely that. It uses the colour and tones in the selected thumbnail (or thumbnails) as the basis for locating other photos in your collection that are similar. The program then displays the results, arranging the most similar results first and successively less-exact matches next.



9 FACE TAGGING

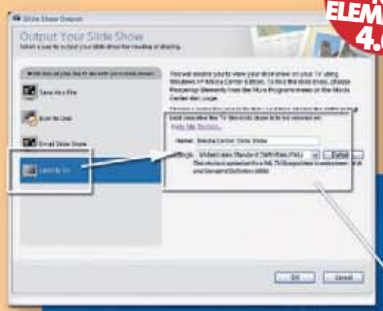
Who says that all the 'face matching' security software that's employed in our major airports has no creative spin-offs In what some might say is a strange application of the technology, Photoshop Elements can now locate and display the faces in not just one but a whole bunch of photos via the Find Faces for Tagging option. For those photographers who regularly create images of people, or groups of people, this feature alone will save loads of time. Just multi-select a variety of images, then choose the **Find > Find Faces for Tagging** option, and Elements will search through the photos, displaying the found faces in a special Tagging dialogue. Next, drag the tags to the faces (or faces to the tags) to add the label to the associated photo.

NEW TO ELEMENTS 4.0

10 SHOW ME THE PICTURES..... ON MY TV!

Media Center computers are starting to pop-up everywhere. These are the machines that let you watch, record and time shift live television, play music and show movies all from your humble PC. With the release of version 4.0 of Elements, Adobe has started to forge strong links with the software (Windows Media Center) that drives these home theatre computers. Now from inside the media center you can access Elements' catalogues and slide shows, directly providing options to display your photos or show your presentations on your TV. Similarly the output options from inside the new revamped Elements slide show editor now include specialist settings for Media Center display.

NEW TO ELEMENTS 4.0



Left: The Media Center Slide Show lets you show presentations on TV

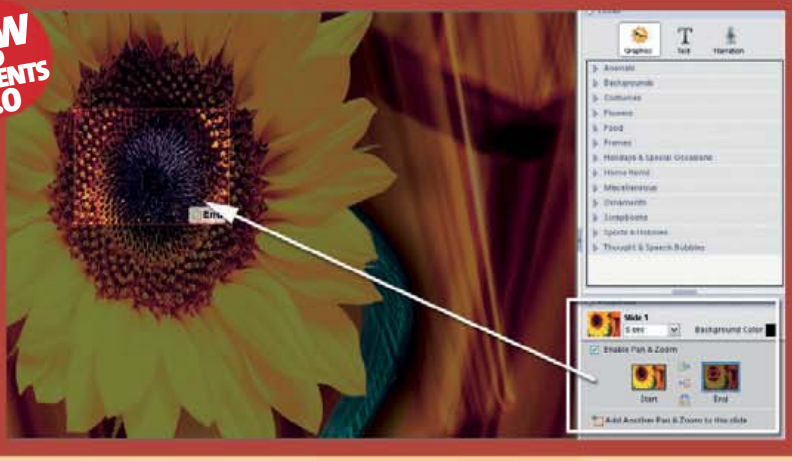
11 FAST EDITS

Though I am a big stickler for ensuring that I maintain quality enhancement practices at all times, there are still occasions when editing speed is more desirable than ultimate editing control. If haste is the order of the day then there is no quicker way to enhance a bunch of photos than to multi-select the pictures in the Organizer first and then choose Auto Smart Fix Selected Photos from the right-click menu. And there is no need to panic if you don't like the auto correction results, because Elements saves the original file along with the newly edited photo in a Version Set, which means that you can reverse the enhancement at any time.

ANIMATED *STILLS*

Is the over use of the 'spiral', 'horizontal blind' or 'coarse dissolve' transitions of home made slide presentations driving you crazy but you still want to add some movement to your otherwise still show? Take a look at the zoom and pan options in the new slide show editor. This feature provides the option to gradually zoom into, or pan across, the surface of a still photo as part of the presentation. The effect can be used to produce very dynamic results and is similar to the techniques that professional documentary film makers use in order to animate historical documents.

NEW TO ELEMENTS 4.0

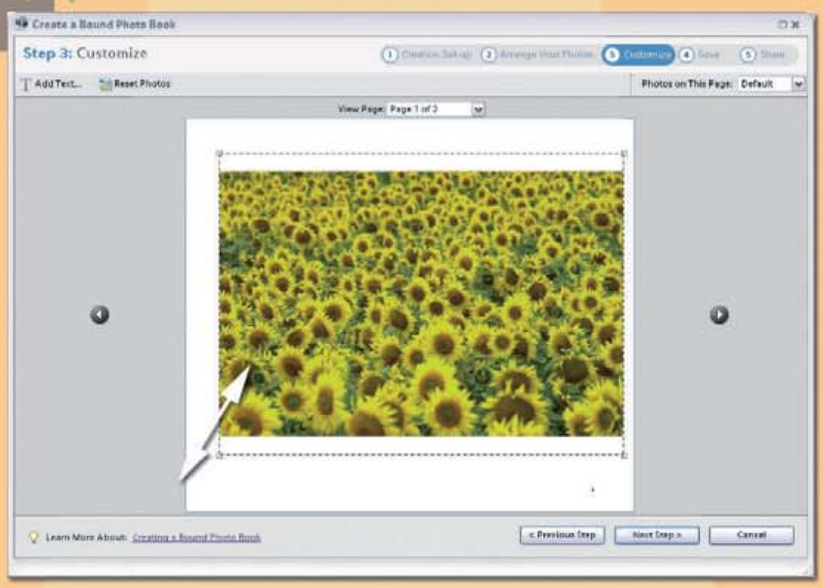


NO AUTOMATION IN ELEMENTS? NOT TRUE

Die-hard Photoshop users often pooh-pooh Photoshop Elements for its lack of automation features, pointing to the batch-processing abilities of the program's bigger brother as proof that no serious photographer would use anything else. But hidden away under the File menu in the Elements Standard Editor workspace is the Process Multiple Files option which gives Elements users a level of automated processing that even Photoshop users would have to admit is impressive. With the controls contained in this single dialogue, you can rename, resize, change file formats, adjust contrast, colour, levels, sharpness and even add a watermark (labels) to files contained in a folder or already open in the workspace. For quick, efficient processing of multiple photos this is certainly the place to start.

LOVE PHOTO BOOKS BUT HATE THE TEMPLATES?

Many users love the Bound Photo Book feature but don't like the pre-made templates that come with it. If you want to take back some design control, then create each of the book pages (complete with text, images and backgrounds) individually as Elements documents and then insert these pages as full-page photos into the Full Bleed book option in the creations wizard.



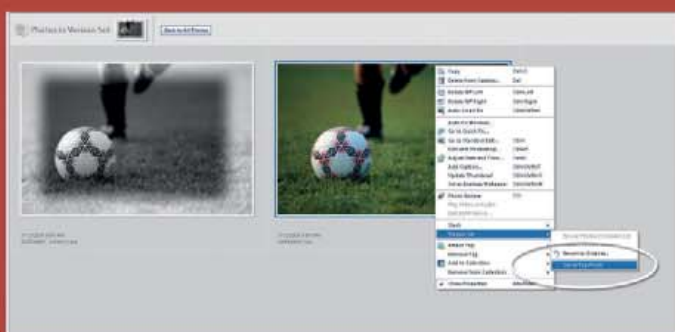
Above: Take back design control when creating your photo book

CHANGE BACKGROUNDS WITH EASE

One of the hardest steps in the process of changing the background of a photo is the erasing of the original background. If the results of this action is convincing then you are well on your way to a successful montage. One option not often used is the Background Eraser tool. Nestled with the other Eraser tools, the pointer for this feature contains two parts – a circle (the size of the selected brush) and a crosshair in the centre. To erase, simply move the crosshair over the areas that you wish to remove.

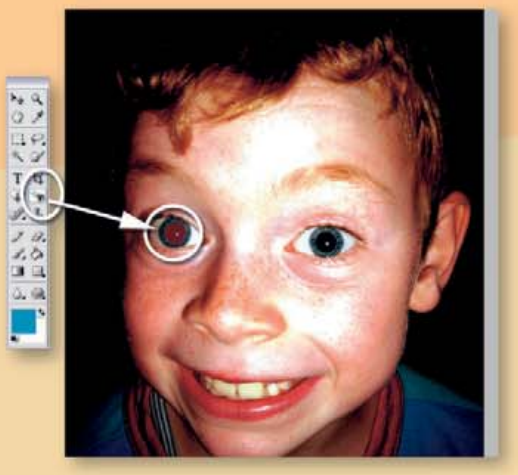
SAVEABLE UNDO - *VERSION SETS*

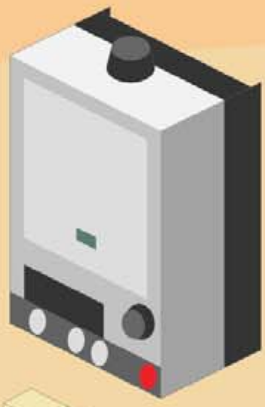
The Version Set feature in Elements is a terrific tool to use when you want to produce a range of editing outcomes from a single photo. As you make changes to the file in the Editor workspace, be sure to save each different enhancement outcome as part of the version set (use the checkbox at the bottom of the Save As dialogue). Now when you close the file, the saved stages of the edit process are stored along with the original. Using the right-click pop-up menu you can elect to display the photos in the set and then promote any version to the top of the set.



17 RED-EYE CORRECTION ON THE FLY

Next time you have to correct the red-eye in a bunch of party photos, try the Red Eye Removal Tool in Elements. Long before this beauty ever appeared in Photoshop, Elements users had been using this one-click wonder to correct the red eye in their flash photos. Simply select the tool and click on the red part of the eye. Elements determines the extent of the red and converts the colour to a more natural dark grey. If the program is having trouble removing all the problem colour, try click-dragging a marquee around the offending pupil.



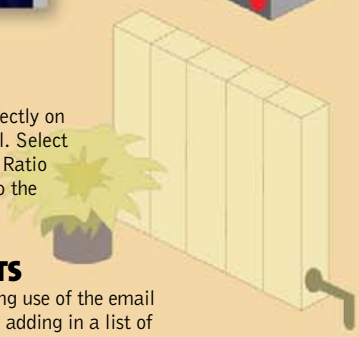


Adobe Photoshop Elements 4.0 (Editor)
File Edit Image Enhance Layer Select Filter View Window
Create
Aspect Ratio: 5 x 7 in
Width: 7 in
No Restriction
Use Photo Ratio
2.5 x 2 in
4 x 6 in
5 x 5 in
5 x 7 in
8 x 10 in
NEW TO ELEMENTS 4.0

Above: So your image doesn't quite fit the paper? The crop tool makes it easy

18 MATCH PHOTO FORMAT TO PAPER PROPORTIONS PERFECTLY

Next time you want to ensure that a photo will fit perfectly on a specific size of printing paper, reach for the crop tool. Select the correct proportions from the options in the Aspect Ratio drop-down menu and then proceed to crop the photo to the format of the printing paper.



19 IMPORT DON'T INPUT YOUR CONTACTS

With the Order Prints and Photo Email features making use of the email and address details from the Elements Contacts Book, adding in a list of your nearest and dearest could be quite a task. But rather than retype all this data, simply import the contacts lists from other programs on your computer. Select Contacts Book from the Edit menu, then click the Import button. Choose the program where the list is stored, then click OK. The contacts and their details are automatically imported and ready to use.

20 MULTIPLE PRINTING AND *DISTRIBUTION ON THE FLY*

You know the story. You're the only one at the family reunion who remembered to bring a camera and now every uncle Tom, Dick and Harry (and that's not mentioning your aunt's requests) wants a copy of the photos you took. I'm sure, that like me, there are plenty readers who just don't have the time to spend the next few weekends printing and posting the pictures to your favorite relatives. Well, sigh no more. The Order Prints pane in Elements provides a print and post solution with drag-and-drop simplicity. After adding in the addresses of family members, simply drag the picture from the organizer work space onto the print pane and a print order will be created. Next, click the Confirm Order button and the order is sent to an online print provider such as the Kodak Easy Share Gallery. Add in some credit card details and the pictures will be printed and posted out to your relatives in a matter of days.

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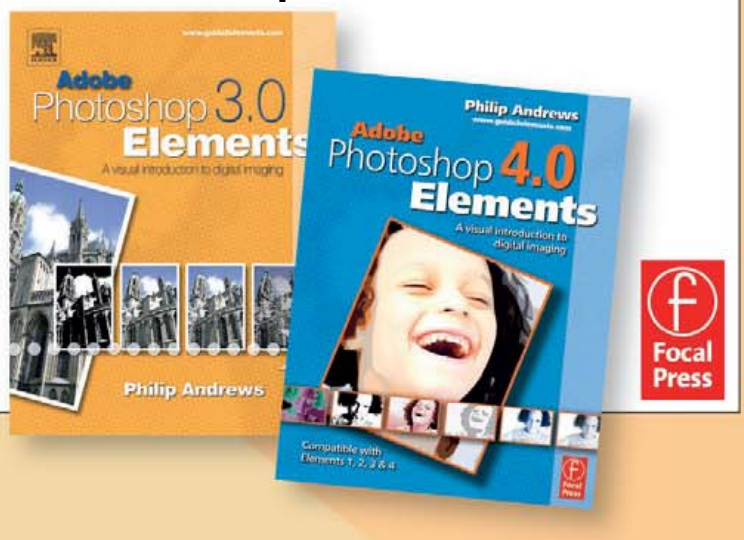
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Peter Charles Turner

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CAMERA Olympus Camedia C2500L

DETAILS
I wanted to portray the emotion in the eye. Most of the image is b&w to concentrate attention on the iris, which is a fiery colour to show stress and anger

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PHOTOGRAPHER
Peter Charles Turner
CAMERA Olympus Camedia C2500L
DETAILS A small, very young plant in a potting tray. I used a very shallow depth of field to concentrate on the petals and an angle of view to show the other pots gradually disappearing into the distance

PHOTOGRAPHER
Peter Charles Turner
CAMERA Olympus Camedia C2500L
DETAILS I am definitely British because I adore a good, fresh cup of tea. This photograph has a kind of abstract look, capturing the idea of a cup of tea showing the edge of the mug and the colour of the tea

PHOTOGRAPHER
Peter Charles Turner
CAMERA Olympus C2500L
DETAILS Quite a surreal-looking photo of three aerosol deodorant cans. I used a black background to enhance the foreground detail. Focus is sharpest on the front can that has most detail, and the image gradually softens into the background

PHOTOGRAPHER
Peter Charles Turner
CAMERA Olympus Camedia C2500L
DETAILS I paid a fortune for my Ibanez guitar and wanted a good photograph. I chose black & white, and shot from a different angle than guitars are normally photographed, making it look like it is under a stage spotlight

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PHOTOGRAPHER
Jimmy Fransson
CAMERA
Nikon D70

DETAILS
Photographed in our garden just after the rain stopped using a Sigma 70-300 APO DG lens. I'm 28 years old from Sweden, I recently went back to school for some catching up. I started with photography again after 15 years.

DETAILS
This is called 'Fly by the wire'. I took this outside my house using a Sigma 70-300 APO DG lens. It was just waiting for me…

PHOTOGRAPHER
Kat Sanderson
CAMERA
Nikon D70

DETAILS
Looking across to Gateshead Quayside with the Millennium Bridge in the foreground and Baltic Arts Centre behind. Taken using a Sigma 10-20mm f4-5.6 lens at f/5.6, a shutter speed of 1/2 sec, ISO 200 and a focal length of 10mm

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PHOTOGRAPHER
Michael McCarthy
CAMERA
Canon EOS 20D

DETAILS
Taken in Chula Vista Nature Reserve, San Diego. I spotted this little guy rummaging for food along the water's edge. He was close enough that I knew the background would be thrown out of focus. Canon 300mm f/4.0 lens at f/5.6, 1/640sec and ISO 100

PHOTOGRAPHER
John Crawley
CAMERA
Nikon Coolpix 4600

DETAILS
I saw the insect on the outside of my bedroom window but could not focus on it correctly (from inside), so I put my head out. The weather was good that day – hence the strong blue reflection. I used f/4.9, ISO 50 with a 17.1mm focal length

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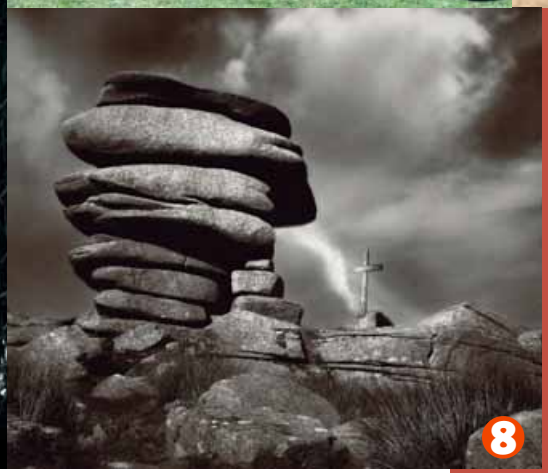
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Round One
Family
7 Niall Prenter
3 Geoff Buxton
12 Annie Jungnitz

Round Two
Community
2 S Paul
15 Peter Bean
4 Richard Crompton

Round Three
Work
9 Chris Mole
1 Nicolas Pye
5 S Paul

Round Four
Faith
11 Dheeraj Paul
10 Marty Garland
8 Rosalind Nicholson

Round Five
Leisure
14 Mike Morton
13 Tim Aston
6 Colin Armitage

VOTE KEY

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Simply select your favourite from the top 15 images of the year (the three winners from each round) and you could win a terrific multimedia system from Olympus, worth £360. The top 15 are displayed here and on our website at **www.whatdigitalcamera.com/gallery/poty.**

To enter, email your vote to **wdc@ipcmedia.com**, writing the picture number and photographer's name in the subject field, or post it to WDC POTY, IPC Media, Stamford Street, London SE1 9LS. Don't forget to add your name, age and contact details. One lucky voter, drawn at random, will win an Olympus M:Robe 500i, worth £360 – a stylish multimedia device incorporating a 1.3MP camera, 20GB hard drive, 3.7" LCD and digital music player.

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Olympus ZUIKO 150mm F2.0	£1949.00
Olympus ZUIKO 50mm F2.0 macro	£357.00
Olympus ZUIKO 300mm F2.8	£4795.00
Olympus EC-14 tele converter	£329.00
Olympus EX-25 extension tube	£105.00

NEW Lenses now available see website

NEW Mamiya ZD SLR

22 mega pixels SLR

- The first integrated medium format digital SLR camera
- 22 mega pixel CCD imaging sensor (total 4008 x 5344)
- 36mm x 48mm Dalsa CCD image sensor is 2 times the size of full 35mm D-SLR
- Mamiya 645AF lens mount
- Frame capture rate of 1.5 fps

Mamiya DIGITAL

ZD Back

See website for details

ZD SLR - Body only **£See web**

NEW Fujifilm FinePix S3 Pro

6.1 mega pixels SLR

- Based on the Nikon F80
- Super CCD SR II sensor,
- 6 million pixel locations (2 photodiodes per pixel location)
- Adjustable dynamic range
- Image sizes up to 4256 x 2848 pixels
- Film simulation modes

S3 Pro - Body only **£1259** or £54mth

S3 Pro Plus...
Nikon AF 18-35mm f3.5-4.5 D **£1589** or £68mth
Nikon AF 24-85mm f2.8-4 D **£1689** or £72mth
Sigma 18-50mm f2.8 EX DC **£1559** or £66mth

Casio

EXILIM EX-Z57	£209.00
EXILIM EX-Z500 new	£229.00
EXILIM EX-Z10	£149.00
EXILIM EX-Z750 new	£269.00
EXILIM EX-S500 new	£249.00
EXILIM EX-P505 new	£319.00

Epson

Epson R-D1	£1999.00

Fujifilm

FinePix A345 Zoom	£124.00
FinePix A350 Zoom	£139.00
FinePix F455 Zoom	£209.00
FinePix F10 Zoom	£245.00
FinePix F810 Zoom	£259.00
FinePix E900 Zoom	£See web
FinePix Z1 Zoom new	£249.00
FinePix S3500 Zoom new	£139.00
FinePix S5600 Zoom	£259.00
FinePix S7000 Zoom new	£299.00
FinePix S9500 Zoom new	£479.00

HP

HP Photosmart M22	£85.00
HP Photosmart M417	£109.00
HP Photosmart M517	£129.00
HP Photosmart R507	£129.00
HP Photosmart R717	£169.00

Printer Bundle Offer See website

Kodak

Easyshare C300 new	£69.00
Easyshare C330 new	£109.00
Easyshare C360 new	£155.00
Easyshare CX7530	£119.00
Easyshare DX7630	£199.00
Easyshare LS753	£169.00
Easyshare V550 new	£249.00
Easyshare Z700 new	£159.00
Easyshare Z740 new	£199.00
Easyshare Dock 6000	£39.00
Easyshare Dock 3	£39.00
Easyshare Printer Dock Plus	£179.00

Konica Minolta

Dimage E500 new	£119.00
Dimage X1 new	£259.00
Dimage X60 new	£189.00
Dimage Z10	£139.00
Dimage Z5	£269.00
Dimage Z6	£299.00
Dimage A200	£369.00

Leica

D-LUX	£599.00
Digilux 2	£1229.00

Casio EXILIM EX-Z500 — 5 mega pixels — £229

Fujifilm FinePix Z1 zoom — 5 mega pixels — £249

HP Photosmart R717 — 6 mega pixels — £169

Ricoh Capilo GX8 — 8 mega pixels — £248

Konica Minolta Dimage Z6 — 6 mega pixels — £299

Olympus µ [mju] Mini S — 5 mega pixels — £165

Samsung DigiMax V700 — 7 mega pixels — £219

Pentax Optio WP — 5 mega pixels — £199

Olympus

C-180	£95.00
µ[mju:] Digital 600 new	£189.00
µ[mju:] Digital 800	£269.00
Mju (µ) -mini S	£165.00
FE-100 new	£99.00
FE-110 new	£129.00
FE-5500	£169.00
IR-300	£199.00
C-770 Movie	£209.00
C-7070 WZ	£345.00
SP-350 new	£269.00
SP-500 new	£259.00

Panasonic

LUMIX DMC-FZ20	£389.00

Pentax

Optio WP - Waterproof	£199.00
Optio 50	£129.00
Optio S60 new	£169.00
Optio S55 new	£169.00
Optio S5Z	£209.00
Optio SVi	£205.00

NEW Optio WPi & S6 See website

Ricoh

Caplio RR530 new	£109.00
Caplio R1V	£167.00
Caplio R3 new	£219.00
Caplio GX8	£248.00
Caplio GR Digital	£379.00

NEW GR Digital See website

Rollei

Prego dp 5500	£149.99
Prego dp 6200	£219.99
Prego dp 5100	£249.99
Prego dp 6000	£199.99
Prego dp 8300 new	£249.99
Prego dr 5	£199.99
Prego dk 4010	£249.99

Samsung

DigiMax A402	£89.00
DigiMax A400	£109.00
DigiMax i5	£209.00
DigiMax V700	£219.00

Sony

Cybershot DSC-P200	£235.00
Cybershot DSC-S40	£129.00
Cybershot DSC-S80	£145.00
Cybershot DSC-S90S	£169.00
Cybershot DSC-T5	£239.00
Cybershot DSC-T33	£249.00
Cybershot DSC-T7	£275.00
Cybershot DSC-W5	£199.00
Cybershot DSC-W7	£235.00
Cybershot DSC-W15	£210.00
Cybershot DSC-W17	£249.00
Cybershot DSC-H1 new	£289.00
Cybershot DSC-M2 new	£See web

NEW DSC-R1 10 Megapixels DSC-N1 8 Megapixels See website

Fujifilm FinePix S5600 Zoom

5 mega pixels — 10x Optical Zoom — 38-380mm Zoom

FUJIFILM **£259** or £11mth

Fujifilm FinePix S9500 Zoom

9 mega pixels — 10.7x Optical Zoom — 28-300mm Zoom

FUJIFILM **£479** or £20mth

Leica DIGILUX 2

5 mega pixels — 3x Optical Zoom — mm Zoom

Leica **£1229** or £52mth

Olympus µ[mju] 600 Digital

5 mega pixels — 3x Optical Zoom — 35-105mm Zoom

OLYMPUS **£189** or £8mth

Olympus µ[mju] 800 Digital

8 mega pixels — 3x Optical Zoom — 35-114mm Zoom

OLYMPUS **£269** or £12mth

Kodak Easyshare Z740

5 mega pixels — 10x Optical Zoom — 38-380mm Zoom

Kodak **£199** or £9mth

Konica Minolta Dimage X1

8 mega pixels — 3x Optical Zoom — 37-111mm Zoom

KONICA MINOLTA **£259** or £11mth

Konica Minolta Dimage X60

5 mega pixels — 3x Optical Zoom — 38-114mm Zoom

KONICA MINOLTA **£189** or £8mth

Sony Cybershot DSC-T7

5 mega pixels — 3x Optical Zoom — 38-114mm Zoom

SONY **£275** or £11mth

Pentax Optio S60

6 mega pixels — 3x Optical Zoom — 35-107mm Zoom

PENTAX **£169** or £8mth

Sony Cybershot DSC-H1

5 mega pixels — 12x Optical Zoom — 36-432mm Zoom

SONY **£289** or £13mth

Rollei Prego dp 8300

8 mega pixels — 3x Optical Zoom — 36-108mm Zoom

Rollei **£249.99** or £11mth

Casio EXILIM EX-Z750

7 mega pixels — 4x Optical Zoom — 38-114mm Zoom

CASIO **£269** or £12mth

Ricoh Caplio R3

5 mega pixels — 7.1x Optical Zoom — 28-200mm Zoom

RICOH **£219** or £10mth

Ricoh Caplio GR Digital

8 mega pixels — x Optical Zoom — mm Zoom

RICOH **£379** or £10mth

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Canon

NEW EOS 5D

SLR | 12.8 mega pixels

NEW

430 EX Speedlite £189

12.8 MP full frame CMOS sensor
3 fps 60 JPEG image burst
9-point AF with 6 Assist AF points
2.5" LCD
Picture Style image processing
DIGIC II
Records RAW/ JPEG images

SEE WEBSITE FOR LATEST PRICES

EOS 5D- Body only
£2399 or £100mth

EOS 5D Plus...
Canon EF 24-105 f/4L IS USM
£2999 or £126mth

5D - Accessories
BG-E4 grip £169.99

NEW EOS 1D MkIIN

SLR | 8.2 mega pixels

8.2 MP CMOS sensor
8.5 fps/48 JPEG image burst
45-point AF
Bright 2.5" 230K pixel LCD
Picture Style image processing
DIGIC II
Wide ISO range from L:50 to H:3200

SEE WEBSITE FOR LATEST PRICES

EOS 1D MkIIN- Body only
£2999 or £126mth

NEW EOS 1Ds MkII

SLR | 16.7 mega pixels

16.7 MP full frame 36 x 24mm CMOS sensor
0.3 second start up and 4fps performance
ISO 100-1600, expandable to L:50 and H:3200
2.0" LCD screen with 230,000 pixels,
1.5-10x playback zoom

EOS 1Ds MkII - Body only
£4749 or £200mth

EOS 1Ds Mk II Plus...
EF 16-35mm f2.8 L USM
£5796 or £245mth
EF 17-40mm f4 L USM
£5308 or £225mth
EF 24-70mm f2.8 L USM
£5668 or £240mth

NEW Canon EOS 350D

Switch to the future with the EOS 350D Digital
and take your creativity to a new dimension. Compact, lightweight and intuitive; delivering results to captivate the most discerning audience.

8.2 mega pixels SLR

TIPA 2005

Worlds lightest digital SLR body
High-performance 8.0-megapixel CMOS sensor
Sophisticated DIGIC II imaging engine
3 frames per second (fps) for up to 14 shots

EOS 350D - Body only
£529 or £23mth

EOS 350D Plus...
EF-S 18-55mm
£599 or £25mth
EF-S 18-55mm + EF 55-200mm + BG-E3 Grip
£799 or £34mth
EF-S 17-85mm + BG-E3 Grip
£979 or £41mth

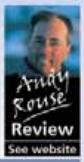
NEW Canon EOS 20D

Balance, Poise, Precision
The EOS 20D is the semi-professional digital SLR to deliver all the speed, precision and flexibility synonymous with high-end film SLR cameras - plus a whole lot more.

8.2 mega pixels SLR

£100 CASH BACK see website for details

£799 with cash back



8.2 Megapixel CMOS sensor
5 fps with up to 23 frame burst
9-point AF
DIGIC II Processor
E-TTL II distance-linked flash

EOS 20D - Body only
£899 or £38mth

EOS 20D Plus...
Canon EF-S 18-55mm f3.5-5.6 DC
£969 or £41mth
Canon EF-S 17-85mm f4-5.6 IS USM
£1269 or £54mth

Canon Lenses

EF20mm f2.8 USM	£329.00	EF20-35mm f/3.5-4.5 USM	£284.00
EF24mm f2.8	£309.00	EF24-85mm f/3.5-4.5 USM	£244.00
EF28mm f1.8 USM	£319.00	EF24-70 F2.8L USM	£899.00
EF28mm f2.8	£137.00	EF24-105 F4 L IS USM	£695.00
EF50mm f1.4 USM	£244.00	EF28-105mm f/4-5.6 USM	£147.00
EF60mm f2.8 Macro	£282.00	EF28-135mm f/3.5-5.6 IS USM	£335.00
EF85mm f1.8 USM	£269.00	EF70-200mm f/2.8 L IS USM	£1299.00
EF300mm f4.0 L IS USM	£924.00	EF70-200mm f/4.0 L USM	£479.00
EF-S10-22mm f3.5-4.5 USM (for EOS 20D & 350D only)	£524.00	EF70-300mm f/4.0-5.6 IS USM NEW	£369.00
EF16-35mm f/2.8 L USM	£999.00	EF75-300mm f/4.0-5.6 USM	£159.00
EF17-40mm f/4.0 L USM	£544.00	EF100-400mm f/4.5-5.6 L IS USM	£1099.00
EF-S17-85mm f4-5.6 USM (for EOS 20D & 350D only)	£427.00		

Canon

NEW MODELS - *See website for more*

IXUS i Zoom

5 mega pixels | 2.4x Optical Zoom | 30-90mm Zoom

Canon £259 or £11mth

IXUS 55

5 mega pixels | 3x Optical Zoom | 35-105mm Zoom

Canon £269 or £12mth

IXUS 750

7 mega pixels | 3x Optical Zoom | 37-111mm Zoom

Canon £339 or £15mth

PowerShot A410

3 mega pixels | 3.2x Optical Zoom | 41-131mm Zoom

Canon £119 or £8mth

PowerShot A610

5 mega pixels | 4x Optical Zoom | 35-140mm Zoom

Canon £229 or £10mth

PowerShot A620

7 mega pixels | 4x Optical Zoom | 35-140mm Zoom

Canon £259 or £10mth

PowerShot S2 IS

5 mega pixels | 12x Optical Zoom | 36-432mm Zoom

Canon £349 or £15mth

PowerShot S80

8 mega pixels | 3.6x Optical Zoom | 28-100mm Zoom

Canon £399 or £17mth

PowerShot G6

7.1 mega pixels | 4x Optical Zoom | 35-140mm Zoom

Canon £389 or £17mth

PowerShot PRO 1

8 mega pixels | 7x Optical Zoom | 28-200mm Zoom

Canon £439 or £19mth

PowerShot S70

4 mega pixels | 3.6x Optical Zoom | 28-100mm Zoom

Canon £299 or £13mth

IXUS 40

7 mega pixels | 3x Optical Zoom | 35-105mm Zoom

Canon £189 or £8mth

IXUS i5	£209.00	IXUS 750 NEW	£339.00	PowerShot S70	£299.00
IXUS i Zoom NEW	£259.00	PowerShot A410 NEW	£119.00	PowerShot S2 IS NEW	£349.00
IXUS 40	£189.00	PowerShot A510	£149.00	PowerShot S80 NEW	£399.00
IXUS 50	£239.00	PowerShot A520	£179.00	PowerShot G6	£389.00
IXUS 55 NEW	£269.00	PowerShot A610 NEW	£229.00	PowerShot PRO 1	£439.00
IXUS 700	£289.00	PowerShot A620 NEW	£259.00		

Nikon

NEW Nikon D50

Vivid colour and sharp details straight from the camera
Specifically designed for consumers looking to upgrade from a digital compact to the next level of digital photography, the D50 is affordable and simple to use; perfect for the SLR beginner.

6.1 mega pixels SLR

6.1 effective megapixel Nikon DX Format CCD
3D Colour Matrix Metering II ensures accurate exposure control and white balance.
Near-instant 0.2-second power-up, and quick shutter response
Fast 2.5 frames per second in bursts of up to 137 frames

NEW LOWER PRICE

Available in... Black Silver

D50 - Accessories CF-D50 Semi Soft Case £34.99

Photographer July 2005 88%
• Great AF and metering
• Good flash
• Faithful RGB
• Really easy to use
• Big and clear LCD

D50 - Body only
£429 or £18mth

D50 Plus...
AF-S DX 18-55mm f3.5-5.6 G ED
£499 or £21mth
AF-S DX 18-70mm f3.5-4.5G IF ED
£599 or £25mth
AF-S DX 18-55mm & AF-S DX55-200mm
£649 or £28mth

NEW Nikon D70s

An evolution of the award winning D70
The D70s is ready to shoot in an instant, taking just 0.2 seconds to power up. Shutter release time lag is minimised for quick response which makes shooting even more efficient and enjoyable.

Remote Control Shutter Release Cord MC-DC 1
£29.99

6.1 mega pixels SLR

6.1 effective megapixel Nikon DX Format CCD
3 frames per second for a continuous burst of up to 144 pictures
0.2 sec. power-up and short shutter release time lag
Large 2.0" LCD monitor with intuitive menus and help display

D70s - Accessories
CF-D70s Semi Soft Case £34.99
EN-EL3 Lith-ion Battery.....£49.99

D70s - Body only
£579 or £25mth

D70s Plus...
Nikkor AF-S DX 18-70mm f3.5-4.5 G SG IF ED
£749 or £32mth

Scoop Purchase
Nikon D100

LAST FEW
£699

Nikon D2Hs

4.1 mega pixels SLR

LBCAST image sensor with 4.1 effective megapixels
Advanced new image processing engine
8 fps for up to 50 consecutive shots
3D-Color Matrix Metering II

D2Hs - Body only
£2049 or £86mth

NEW Nikon D2X

12.4 mega pixels SLR

12.4 effective megapixels
Continuous shooting at 5 fps
8fps shooting at 6.8 megapixels
Faster read/write speed for the memory card
Advanced 3D-Color Matrix Metering II
2.5-inch LCD monitor

D2X - Body only
£2999 or £126mth

D2X Plus...
AF-D 12-24mm f4 G
£3733 or £156mth
AF-S 17-55mm f2.8 G
£3988 or £164mth
Sigma 18-50mm f2.8 EX DC
£3299 or £138mth

Nikkor Lenses

DX Fisheye 10.5mm f2.8 ED	£489.00	135mm f2 D DC	£899.00	AF-S VRG 24-120mm f3.5-5.6 IF ED	£436.00
14mm f2.8 D	£1096.00	180mm f2.8 D IF ED	£579.00	AF-S 28-70mm f2.8 D	£1148.00
16mm f2.8 Fisheye	£559.00	AF-S 300mm f4 IF ED	£866.00	AF-DG 28-200mm f3.5-5.6 AF-DH	£197.00
18mm f2.8 D	£1146.00	AF-D 12-24mm	£729.00	AFS-DX 55-200mm Black or Silver	£175.00
20mm f2.8 D	£486.00	AF-S 17-35mm f2.8	£1146.00	70-200mm VR AFS-G2.8	£1186.00
24mm f2.8 D	£349.00	AF-S DX 17-55mm f2.8	£969.00	80-200mm f2.8D ED+CL-43A	£799.00
28mm f1.4 D	£1489.00	AF-S DX18-55mm f3.5-5.6G IF ED	£169.00	AF VR 80-400mm f4.5-5.6 DED	£1019.00
28mm f2.8 D	£189.00	18-35mm f3.5-4.5 D	£338.00	AF-S VR 200-400mm f4 G IF ED	£4399.00
50mm f1.4D	£216.00	AF-S DX 18-70mm f3.5-4.5 G	£189.00		
50mm f1.8 D	£98.00	24-50mm f3.3-4.5 D	£325.00		
85mm f1.4 D IF	£777.00	24-85mm f2.8-4 DIF	£435.00		
85mm f1.8 D	£328.00	AF-S 24-85mm f3.5-4.5 G IF-ED	£287.00		
105mm f2 D DC	£739.00				

NEW 300mm f2.8 VR 200mm f2 VR
See website for details

See the full range on our website

Nikon

COOLPIX S2

NEW
5 mega pixels
3x Optical Zoom
35-105mm Zoom
£239 or £10mth

COOLPIX S3

NEW
6 mega pixels
3x Zoom-Nikkor ED
35-105mm Zoom
£269 or £12mth

COOLPIX S4

NEW
6 mega pixels
10x Zoom-Nikkor
38-380mm Zoom
£299 or £13mth

COOLPIX P2

NEW
5.1 mega pixels
3.5x Optical Zoom
36-126mm Zoom
Wi-Fi
£249 or £11mth

COOLPIX 7600

NEW
7 mega pixels
3x Optical Zoom
35-114mm Zoom
£215 or £9mth

COOLPIX 7900

NEW
7 mega pixels
3x Optical Zoom
38-114mm Zoom
£259 or £11mth

COOLPIX S1

5 mega pixels
3x Optical Zoom
35-105mm Zoom
£215 or £9mth

COOLPIX 8400

8 mega pixels
3.5x Optical Zoom
24-85mm Zoom
£459 or £20mth

COOLPIX 8800

8 mega pixels
10x Optical Zoom
mm Zoom
£499 or £21mth

Coolpix S1	£215.00	Coolpix P2 NEW	£249.00	Coolpix 7900 NEW	£259.00
Coolpix S2 NEW	£239.00	Coolpix 4600	£129.00	Coolpix 8400	£459.00
Coolpix S3 NEW	£269.00	Coolpix 4800	£169.00	Coolpix 8800	£499.00
Coolpix S4 NEW	£299.00	Coolpix 7600 NEW	£215.00		

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NEW ZIGVIEW - Digital Angle Finder

ZIGVIEW - the worlds first ever Digital Angle Finder, makes low and high level photography easy with its unique rotating LCD monitor.

Simply attach to the eyepiece of your SLR camera where the viewfinder image is captured by a CMOS sensor built into the Zigview and relayed in real time to a 1.9inch TFT colour display for easy viewing at any angle.

Especially useful for low angle photography where you would struggle to see through the viewfinder especially with macro work or high angle situations such as press work.

ZIGVIEW *will work with most digital and film SLR cameras and is supplied with an eyepiece adaptor for common Nikon, Fuji and Canon cameras. Other adapters for Knoica Minolta and Pentax are available as accessories.*

£114.99

DIGITAL CAMERA ACCESSORIES

For a comprehensive list of Digital Camera accessories from all the major manufacturers visit our website

Canon

Tele Converter Lenses

TC-DC58	£79.00
TC-58B	£99.00
TC-DC58N	£79.00
TC-DC58A	£199.00
TC-DC52	£99.00
TC-DC52A	£79.00
TC-DC52B	£99.00
TC-DC10	£99.00

Wide Converter Lenses

WC-DC10	£99.00
WC-DC58A	£99.00
WC-DC58N	£109.00
WC-DC52	£79.00
WC-DC52A	£99.00

Please note: *A conversion lens adaptor is required for all lenses listed here ~ see website for details ~*

Battery Grips

BG-E1	£79.00
BG-E2	£149.99
BG-E3	£119.99
BG-ED3	£149.99
BG-E4	£169.99

Lith-ion Batteries

BP511A	£54.99
NB1 LH	£35.00
NB2 LH	£45.00
NB3L / 4L	£29.00
NB 4H / 5H / 6N	£35.00

Battery Chargers

CA DC 20E	£45.00
CA 560	£59.99
CB-5L	£39.99
CB2	from £35.00
CBK4	£40.00
Powershot	£40.00
Car Battery Chargers	from £49.00

Canon AC Adaptors **from £45.00**
- See website for details ~

Canon Soft Camera Cases

SC-PS	All £18.00	SC-DC10	£15.00
DCC		SC-DC20	£18.00
10 / 20 / 30	£25.99	SC-DC30	£20.00
DCC 40	£15.00	SC-DC40	£18.00
DCC 50-400	£19.99	SC-DC70	£19.00
DCC BG	£16.00	Leather Case	£15.00

Waterproof Casing

AW DC10-50	£99.00	AW PS200	£149.00
WP DC1-900	£149.00	IXUS 300WPC	£149.00

See Website for the full range of Canon accessories

Olympus

Lenses

Telephoto Lenses

1.7x TCON-17	£89.99
TCON-17C	£109.99
TCON-14D	£149.99

Wide Angle Lenses

0.7x WCON-07	£139.99
WCON-07C	£149.99
WCON-08D	£149.99

Please note: *A conversion lens adaptor is required for all lenses - see website for details*

Batteries & Power

Lith-ion Batteries

LI-30B	£39.99
LI-12B	£29.99
PS-BLM1	£69.99

Power Battery Holders

B-HLD20	£79.99
B-HLD30	£149.99

For list of Chargers & AC Adapters - *see website*

Olympus Cases & Waterproof Cases

Olympus Camera Cases

Compact Easy Leather Case	£14.99
Leather Case for µ[mju:] range	£24.99
BLACK Leather Case for MJU-Mini	£19.99
RED Leather Case for MJU-Mini	£19.99
Leather Case for Ultra Zoom 7 Series	£29.99
Leather Case for FE5500	£24.99
Leather Case for C-5060WZ/7070WZ	£24.99

Olympus Underwater Cases

CWPC-01 Outdoor case	£69.99	PT-022 Underwater case	£199.99
PT-016 Underwater case	£119.99	PT-024 Underwater case	£179.99
PT-017 Underwater case	£109.99	PT-020 Underwater case	£199.99

Olympus Flashguns

FL-20 Flash Unit	£119.99
FL-36 Flash Unit	£139.99
FL-50 Flash Unit	£349.99

See Website for the full range of Olympus accessories

Nikon

Lenses

Tele Converter Lenses

TC-E2	£105.99
TC-E3ED	£219.99
TC-E15ED	£149.99
TC-E17ED	£329.99

Wide Converter Lenses

WC-E24	£75.99
WC-E63	£105.99
WC-E68	£139.99
WC-E75	£179.99
WC-E80	£149.99

Please note: *A conversion lens adaptor may be required for all lenses listed here - see website for details*

Batteries & Power

Lith-ion Batteries

EN-EL1	£39.99	EN-EL7E	£49.99
EN-EL2	£39.99	EN-EL8	£29.99
EN-EL5	£29.99	EN-MH1	
EN-EL7	£39.99	NIMH	£5.99

Chargers & Adaptors

EH-21	£59.99	MB-E5700	£124.99
EH-53	£39.99	MB-CP10	£124.99
EH-54	£29.99	MB-CP11	£124.99
EH-60	£39.99	MH-53	£24.99
EH-61	£19.99	MH-53C	£49.99
EH-62A	£29.99	MH-56	£24.99
EH-62B	£29.99	MH-60	£24.99
EH-62C	£	MH-61	£19.99
EH-63	£29.99	MH-62	£19.99
MB-E5000	£124.99	Coolstation MV-II for S1/S2/S3/S4	£39.99

Nikon Cases For:-

22/32/41/42/52/46/56/76/7900	£19.99
S1/S2/S3/S4	£19.99
P2	£19.99
COOLPIX 995/4500	£29.99
COOLPIX 4800	£24.99
COOLPIX 5000	£29.99
COOLPIX 5700/8700/8800	£29.99
COOLPIX 5400/8400	£29.99

See Website for the full range of Nikon accessories

Pentax

Batteries & Power

Pentax Lith-ion Batteries

D-LI2	£29.99
D-LI7	£39.99
D-LI8	£29.99

Pentax AC Adapters

K-AC5	£39.99	K-AC8	£39.99
K-AC7	£39.99		

Pentax Camera Cases for...

Optio 30	£14.99
Optio S30/S40/S50	£19.99
Optio 33WR/43WR	£14.99
Optio S5i/S5N/S5Z	£29.99
Optio 750Z	£19.99

See Website for the full range of Pentax accessories

Fujifilm

Lenses & Adaptors

Wide Converter lenses

WL-FX9B	£99.99
WL-FXE01	£69.99

Tele Converter lenses

TL-FX9B	£99.99
TL-FXE01	£69.99

Adaptor Rings

AR-FX9 adaptor for 55mm filter £29.99

Batteries and Power

Lith-ion Batteries

NP-30	£39.99
NP-40	£39.99
NP-60	£39.99
NP-80	£39.99

Chargers

BC-80 Battery recharger	£52.99
BC-65 Battery Charger	£52.99

AC Power Adapters

AC-3V	£29.99
AC-5VH	£29.99
AC-5V Car Adaptor	£29.99

Fujifilm Soft Camera Cases For:-

A330/A340	£14.99	F700/F710/F810	£14.99
S3500	£19.99	S5000/S5500/	
E-Series	£14.99	S600	£19.99
F440	£14.99	S7000/S20 Pro	£19.99

See Website for the full range of Fujifilm accessories

Konica Minolta

Lenses

Wide Converter Kit ZCW-100 ..... £69.99
Wide-angle Lens ZCW-300 ..... £79.99
Telephoto Lens ACT-100 ..... £149.99
Wide-angle Lens ACW-100 ..... £149.99

Batteries & Power

Lith-ion Batteries

NP-200	£29.99	NP-600	£29.99
NP-400	£49.99	NP-700	£29.99

Battery Packs

Battery Pack BP-400 ..... £99.99

AC Adapters

AC-11	£49.99	AC-9GB	£39.99

Konica Minolta Camera Cases

Case for X Series	£14.99	Case CS-DG1000	£14.99
Case for X50	£14.99	Case CS-DG600	£29.99
Case CS-DG700	£19.99	Case MB-D1	£29.99

See Website for the full range of Konica Minolta accessories

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25 AW 3.5"x2.5"x6"	£16.00	300 Computer Care	£49.00
30 AW 6"x2.5"x6"	£19.00	4 2.25"x0.5"x4"	£8.00
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for DIGITAL CAMERAS

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Hahnel HL-511 (Canon)	£24.99	Hahnel HL-EL1 (Nikon)	£24.99
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Extensis PhotoFrame 2.5	£159.00
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MV850i	£329	MVX25i	£589
MV880X	£349	MVX45i	£619
MVX40	£479		
MVX4i NEW	£749		
DM-XM2	£1399		
DM-XL2 Body	£2599		
DM-XL2 + XL5.4-108 L IS	£2999		

Canon MV800

£219

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Digital 8 DCR-TRV 285	£229	DCR PC 55	£479
Digital 8 DCR-TRV 480	£309	DCR PC 1000	£689
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SONY £389

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DIGIMAGIC DM 220 8x £129.00

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Canon PIXMA iP4000 £99

Canon PIXMA iP3000 £82

Canon PIXMA iP1600 £55 NEW

Canon PIXMA iP2200 £79 NEW

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PIXMA iP2000 ..... £65.00	PIXMA iP6000D £159.00	PIXMA MP450 NEW £139.00
PIXMA iP2200 NEW ..£79.00	PIXMA iP6600D NEW £See web	PIXMA MP500 NEW £189.00
PIXMA iP3000 ..... £82.00	PIXMA iP8500 ..... £249.00	PIXMA MP750 ..... £199.00
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LaCie

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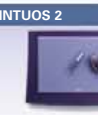

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- *S/Ware package includes Adobe PhotoShop Elements 2.0*

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Canon Canoscan 8400F

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LiDE 60	£59.00
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4200F	£69.00
5200F	£118.00
8400F	£139.00
9950F	£259.00

EPSON Scanners

EPSON Perfection 4990 Photo

- *High optical density up to 4.0 dmax*
- *4800 x 9600dpi for superior scanning results*
- *Built-in transparency unit for multi-format film scanning*
- *Digital Ice - for dust and scratch removal*

£309.00

EPSON Perfection 4490 Photo NEW

£179

EPSON Flatbed/Film Scanners

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Perfection 3490 Photo NEW	£79.00
Perfection 3590 Photo NEW	£99.00
Perfection 4490 Photo NEW	£179.00
Perfection 4990 Photo	£309.00

HP Scanners

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HP Flatbed Scanners

Photosmart 1200	£69.00
Scanjet 4600	£129.00
Photosmart 4670	£139.00
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Minolta Film Scanners

Minolta Scan Elite 5400 II NEW

£495

Minolta Scan Dual IV

£215

Minolta Scan Dual IV £215.00

Minolta Scan Elite 5400 II NEW £495.00

Nikon Film Scanners

Coolscan V ED

Super Coolscan 5000 ED

Nikon Coolscan V ED £425.00

Nikon Super Coolscan 5000ED £695.00

Nikon Super Coolscan 9000ED £2199.00

EPSON Film Scanners

EPSON F3200 NEW

- *High speed, high quality 3200dpi film scanner*
- *Film scanning from 35mm to 5"x4"*
- *USB 2.0 Hi-Speed and IEEE 1394 (FireWire) connectivity*
- *Preview images with built-in LCD screen*

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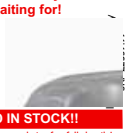
This is the camera everyone has been waiting for!



- 12.8MP Full frame CMOS Sensor
- 3 fps 60 JPEG image burst
- Large 2.5" LCD

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Please phone or see our website for full details!
Bundles available with new EF 24-105mm f/4L IS USM Lens and 430EX Flash

Canon EOS 20D

- 8.2 Mega Pixels
- Accepts all Canon EF and EF-S lenses
- 5 fps

Plus **CASHBACK** - see web or phone

EOS 20D Body Only	£899*
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Canon Lenses

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EF 100mm f/2.8 USM Macro	£392.00
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EF 180mm f/3.5 L USM Macro	£1,039.00
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EF 24-85mm f/3.5-4.5 USM	£249.00
EF 28-90mm f/4.0-5.6S unboxed	£65.00
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EF 28-105mm f/4-5.6 Non USM	£109.99
EF 28-105mm f/4-5.6 USM	£159.00
EF 28-135mm f/3.5-5.6 USM IS	£339.00
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EF 28-200mm F3.5-5.6 Non USM	£319.00
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EF 75-300mm f/4.0-5.6 USM IS	£352.00
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EOS 350D

- 8.0 Mega Pixel
- 3 fps

Lens Sold Separately

IN STOCK!

350D Body only	£534.99*
350D +18-55mm	£619.99*
350D +18-55mm+Grip	£719.99*
350D +18-55mm+Grip+Spare Battery	£762.00*
350D +18-55mm+55-200mm	£765.00*
350D + 17-40mm f/4.0L	£1088.00*
350D + 28-135mm IS	£867.99*

EOS 1D Mark II N

- 8.2 MP CMOS
- 8.5 fps • 2.5" LCD
- Other internal changes - see parkcameras.co.uk

Lens sold separately
Body SRP £3049.99

Our Price £Phone

Please call or see web to place deposit for earliest supply - expected this month!

EOS 1Ds Mark II

- 16.7 million pixels
- Full Frame CMOS
- Professional Build

Our Price
£4879.00*

SRP £5999.99

1Ds II + NP-E3 Spare Battery	£4969*
1Ds II + NP-E3 + 1GB Extr. III	£5059*
1Ds II + EF 24-70mm f/2.8 USM	£5779*
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SRP £419.00 Our Price £339.00
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also: PowerShot A410, A610, A620, Digital IXUS *i* Zoom**

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- 8.0 megapixels for prints up to A2
- 7x L-Series lens

Our Price
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Pro 1 + TC-DC58A lens + LA-DC58C adapter **£579.99***

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- 5.0 million pixels
- 12x optical zoom
- Image Stabilisation
- Digic II (2.4 fps)

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Digital Ixus 700	£279.99*
PowerShot S60 (3)	£264.99*
PowerShot S70	£284.99*
PowerShot S2 IS	£344.99*
Powershot G6	£379.99
EOS 20DA	£Phone
EOS 1D Mark II N Body	£Phone
EOS 1Ds Mark II Body	£4798.00
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Digital IXUS 40

- 4.0 million pixels
- 3x optical zoom
- Ultra Slim Body

Our Price
£184.99*

SRP £279.00

+ 256MB SD Card + leather case **£214.99***

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- 5.0 million pixels
- 3x optical zoom
- Ultra Slim Body

Our Price
£224.99*

SRP £319.00

+ 256MB SD Card + leather case **£254.99***

PowerShot A95

- 4.0 million pixels
- 3x optical zoom
- Ultra Slim Body

Our Price
£199.99*
with free Canon Case

SRP £279.00

+ 256MB SD Card + Canon case **£234.99***

Digital IXUS 750

- Perpetual Curve design
- 3x optical zoom
- 2.5" LCD Screen

Our Price
£339.00*

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+ 256MB SD Card + leather case **£214.99***

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Selphy DS700**	£99.99*
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Pixma IP 1500	£39.99*
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Pixma IP 5000	£132.00
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CanoScan 5200F	£129.00*
CanoScan 8400F	£149.00*
CanoScan 9950F	£309.00*

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Speedlite 580EX	£294.99*
Speedlite 580EX + ST-E2	£409.99*
Speedlite 580EX + Fast Battery Mains/Car Charger + 4x NiMH Batts	£314.99*
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Macrolite MT-24EX	£589.00*
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Speedlite Bracket SB-E1	£114.99*
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Please see website or call for flash cords, macrolite adaptors and other accessories

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RS60E3 (350D)	£22.00*

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- 6 Mega Pixels
- 2.5 fps
- Extra large 2.0" LCD Screen

lens sold separately
Body SRP £549.99

Our Price
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NEW LOW PRICE

D50 body (silver or black)	£409.99
D50 + 18-55mm	£489.99
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Add Nikon Capture 4.2 (with upgrade available free to 4.3) to any package for only £99.99 - while current stocks last!

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D50 + 18-70mm + 512MB SD	£684.98
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For your own personal quote for new system please phone or e-mail us

Nikon D2X

- 12.4Mp CMOS
- 5 fps or 8fps with High Speed Cropped Mode
- 11-area Multi-CAM2000 AF

IN STOCK

Body SRP £3499.99

Lens Sold Separately

D2X body	£2849.00
D2X + Capture 4.3	£2949.00

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Nikon D70s

- 6.1 megapixel
- 0.2s start up time
- Long Battery Life

Our Price
£589.99*

lens sold separately
Body SRP £699.99

D70s body	£589.99
D70s + 18-70mm	£749.99
D70s + 18-70mm + 1GB CF	£809.99

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Nikon D100

- 6.1 megapixel
- Excellent Build Quality

SRP £1299.99
lens sold separately

D100 Body	£699.00
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D100 + 18-70mm DX + SanDisk 1GB Extreme III CF Card	£959.00

Please phone for your custom quote

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SC19 TTL Multi Flash Sync	£47.50*
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Coolpix S1 Silver

- 5.1 million pixels
- 3 x optical zoom
- Ultra Slim Design

Our Price
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SRP £299.99

Fuji 256MB SD + Nikon Leather Case **£253.99***

Coolpix S2

- 5.1 million pixels
- 3 x optical zoom
- Ultra Slim Design

Our Price
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SRP £299.99

Fuji 256MB SD + Nikon Leather Case **£274.99***

Coolpix 7900

- 7.1 million pixels
- 3 x optical zoom
- Includes Lithium Ion Battery + Charger

Our Price
£269.99

SRP £299.99

Fuji 256MB SD + Nikon Leather Case **£304.99***

Coolpix 7600

- 7.1 million pixels
- 3 x optical zoom
- In Camera Red Eye Removal

Our Price
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SRP £299.99

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Coolpix P2 NEW	£289.99
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D2Hs	£2199.00*
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Nikon Scanners

Coolscan V	£428.00*
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Coolscan 9000	£2149.00*

Scanner Accessories

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SA30 Roll Film Adaptor	£669.99*
FH G1 Medical Slide Holder	£219.99
IA20 IX240 APS Adaptor	£159.99
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Nikon Lenses

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AF-D 24mm f/2.8	£349.99*
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AF-D 50mm f/1.8	£99.99
AF-D 60mm f/2.8 Micro	£360.00
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AF-D 85mm f/1.4	£799.99*
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AF-S 200mm f/2 VR+ TC-17E II	£2899.00
AF-S 300mm f/2.8G IF-ED VR	£3399.00
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AF-S 17-55mm f/2.8G IF-ED D	£979.00
AF-D 18-35mm f/3.5-4.5	£319.99
AF-S 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 G Unboxed	£99.99
AF-S 18-70mm f/3.5-4.5	£189.99
AF-D 24-85mm f/2.8-4 IF	£459.00
AF-S 24-85mm f/3.5-4.5G ED	£279.00
AF-S 24-120mm f/3.5-5.6G IF VR	£449.00
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AF-D 28-105mm f/3.5-4.5 IF	£309.99
AF-G 28-200mm f/3.5-5.6 IF ED Silv	£199.00
AF-S 55-200mm f/4-5.6 DX	£189.00
AF-D 70-180mm f/4.5-5.6 ED	£849.99*
AF-G 70-300mm f/4-5.6	£149.99
AF-D 70-300mm f/4-5.6 ED	£279.99
AF-S 70-200mm f/2.8G IF VR ED	£1249.00
AF-D 80-400mm F4.5-5.6 VR	£1079.99
AF-S 200-400mm f/4G IF-ED VR	£4299.99
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TC-17E II 1.7x AF-S Converter	£299.99
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EN-EL2 (2500, 3500, SQ)	£29.99*
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EN-EL3A (D70s)	£49.99
EN-EL4 (D2H, D2X)	£89.99
2x EN-EL4 (D2H, D2X)	£149.99*
EN-EL5 (4200, 5200, 7900)	£29.99
EN-EL6 (Coolwalker)	£59.99
EN-EL7 (8400, 8800)	£39.99
EN-EL7e with LED indicator	£49.99
EN-EL8 (S1, S2)	£29.99
EN-4 (D1X, D1H)	£89.99

Nikon Converters

Phone or see our website to get correct converter & adaptor for your camera

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FC-E9 Fisheye (8400,8700,8800)	£229.99
WC-E75 0.75x wide (8400)	£159.99
WC-E80 0.8x wide (5700,8700)	£229.99
WM-E80 0.8x wide (8400,8800)	£69.99
TC-E15ED 1.5x tele (5400,5700)	£129.99
TC-E17ED 1.7x tele (8700,8800)	£279.99
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FF-CP11 NC Filter (for 8800)	£19.99
FF-CP11 CPL Filter (for 8800)	£45.99
FF-CP11 ND4 Filter (for 8800)	£19.99

Battery Grips

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MB-E5700 for 5700/8700	£124.99
MB-CP10 for 8400	£124.99
MB-CP11 for 8800	£124.99

We stock a wide variety of other accessories- please phone/ see web

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MH 15 (for F100)	£69.99*
MH16 Quick Charger (D1X)	£189.99*
MH17 Quick Charger (for EN-4)	£139.99*
MH18 (for EN-EL3)	£34.99
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MH-53c Car Charger (for 8700)	£49.99
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MH-61 (for EN-EL5 battery)	£19.99
MH-70 (for 2100, 3100)	£19.99

Mains Adapters

EH-4 (for D1X/ D1H)	£74.99
EH-5 (for D100)	£74.99
EH-6 (for D2H)	£74.99
EH-21 (for 775, 4500, 5000, 5700)	£59.99
EH-31	£52.99
EH-53 (for 4500, 5700, 8700)	£39.99
EH-60 (for 2500, 3500)	£39.99
EH-61 (for 2100, 3100)	£19.99
EH-62A (for 4200, 5200)	£29.99
EH-62B (for 2200, 3200)	£29.99
EH-63 (for S1)	£Phone

Other Accessories

Capture 4.3 Software	£109.99*
30GB Coolwalker	£299.99*
WT1 Wireless Transmitter	£349.99
WT-2 Wireless Transmitter	£549.99

Remotes

MC-EU1 Remote Cord (8700)	£89.99*
MC-30 Remote Cord (for D2X)	£55.99
ML-L3 Remote (for D70, D70s)	£14.99

Lens Hoods and Caps

HR-E5700 Lens Hood (for 5700)	£19.99
HN-CP10 Lens Hood (for 5400)	£19.99
HN-CP11 Lens Hood (for 8700)	£19.99
HN-CP12 Lens Hood (for 8400)	£24.99
HN-CP14 Lens Hood (for 8800)	£24.99
LC-CP10 Lens Cap (for 5700)	£6.99

For SLR Lens Hoods please phone or see www.parkcameras.co.uk

Nikon Cases

Leather Case for 5000/5400/8400	£24.99*
Leather Case for 5700/8700/8800	£29.99
Leather Case for 4200/5200/7900	£17.99*
Leather Case for 4800	£18.99*
Leather Case for S1/S2	£19.99*
CF-D70 Soft Case for D70/D70s	£34.99

Underwater Housings

WP-CP2 (for 4200/ 5200)	£159.99*
WP-CP3 (for 4600/ 5600)	£139.99*
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AF 50mm f/2.8 EX DG Macro 55mm	£194.99*	£209.99*
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- 10.2 million pixels
- Foveon X3(R) direct image sensor uses three silicon-embedded layers of pixel sensors, stacked to take advantage of silicons ability to absorb red, green, and blue light at different respective depths

was £1099.99 — Lens Sold Separately

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- 5.1 Megapixel
- 3 x Optical Zoom
- 2.5" LCD

Camera Only £179.99

+ Sony 256MB Pro + Sony LCS WA Case	£230.00*
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- 7.2 million pixels
- 2.5" LCD screen
- 3 x optical zoom
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- 7.2 Megapixel
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- 3x optical zoom
- slim design

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- 5.1 million pixels
- 2.5" LCD screen
- 3 x optical zoom
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- Fourth Generation Super CCD with 3.1 million S-Pixels + 3.1 million R-Pixels, delivering 6.03 million recorded pixels
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- Full manual control
- External flash option via PC sync socket or hot-shoe
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- Superb Low Light mode (1600 ISO)

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- 10x optical zoom
- Pop up Flash

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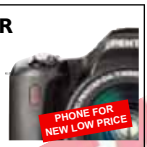

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- 5x Optical zoom
- Compact Body

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- 5 Million pixels
- 3x Optical zoom
- Large 2.5" LCD

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Pentax * ist DL

- 6.1 Million Pixels
- 2.5" LCD
- compact design

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- 3x optical zoom

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- Magnesium Alloy

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Fuji 1GB 133x speed	£95.00*
Sandisk 512MB	£44.00
Sandisk 512MB Ultra II	£55.00*
Sandisk 1GB	£80.00*
Sandisk 1GB Ultra II	£90.00*
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- Dynax 7D/17/35 £999.99
- Dynax 7D/SIG 18/200 £929.99
- Dynax 7D/SIG 18/125 £869.99
- Dynax 7D/SIG 28/200 £829.99
- Dynax 7D/SIG 28/300 £839.99
- Dynax 7D/SIG 24/70 2.8 £959.99
- Dynax 7D/TAM 28/300 £879.99
- Dynax 7D/TAM 18/200 £949.99
- Dynax 7D/TAM 11/18 £1039.99
- Dynax 7D/TAM 17/35 £979.99
- Dynax 5D £529.99
- Dynax 5D 18/70 £549.99
- Dynax 5D/SIG 18/200 £779.99
- Dynax 5D/SIG 18/125 £719.99
- Dynax 5D/SIG 28/200 £669.99
- Dynax 5D/SIG 28/300 £689.99
- Dynax 5D/SIG 24/70 2.8 £849.99
- Dynax 5D/TAM 28/300 £739.99
- Dynax 5D/TAM 18/200 £789.99
- Dynax 5D/TAM 11/18 £899.99
- Dynax 5D/TAM 17/35 £849.99

Olympus
- E-300 14-45 f3.5/5.6 £599.99
- E-300 Twin lens kit £629.99
- E1 14-45 f3.5/5.6 £599.99

Pentax
- *ist DS body £call
- *ist DS /18-55 £call
- *ist DL /18-55 £549.99

SLR LENSES

Canon
EF USM 100 Macro f2.8 £389.99
EF USM 60 Macro f2.8 £279.99
EF USM 20 f2.8 £329.99
EF 24 f2.8 £299.99
EF-S USM 10/22 f3.5/4.5 £559.99
EF-L USM 16/35 f2.8 £999.99
EF-L USM 17/40 f4 £549.99
EF-S 18-55 f3.5/4.5 £99.99
EF-S 18-55 f3.5/4.5USM £129.99
EF- L USM 24/70 f2.8 £938.99
EF-S USM 17/85 IS f4.5/5.6 £439.99
EF USM 20/35 f2.8 £289.99
EF USM 24/85 f3.5/4.5 £244.99
EF 28/105 f4/5.6 £129.99
EF USM 28/105 f4/5.6 £159.99
EF USM 28/105 f3.5/4.5 MK2 £184.99
EF USM 28/135 f3.5/5.6 IS £334.99
EF USM 70/200L f4 £479.99
EF USM 70-200IS f2.8 £1299.99
EF USM 28/200 f3.5 £329.99
EF USM 55/200 f4.5/5.6 II £189.99
EF USM 75/300 DO IS f4/5.6 £844..99
EF USM 75/300IS f4/5.6 £354.99
EF USM 75/300 III f4/5.6 £184.99
EF DC 75/300 f4/5.6 £159.99
EF USM 90/300 f4/5.6 £169.99
EF USM 100/400f4.5-5.6L IS £1,149.99
EF USM f3.5-5.6L 28-300mm £1,639.95

Canon Lenshoods
ET54 £19.99 • ET60 £22.99 • ET64II £29.99
ET65B £27.99 • ET67 £26.99 • ET67B £27.99
ET83C £24.99 • ET60B £9.99 • ET60C £22.99
EW60II £19.99 • EW63II £19.99 • EW73B £21.99
EW75II £29.99 • EW78BII £24.99 • EW78D £19
EW83E £26.99 • EW83F £24.99 • EW83II £19.99

Nikon
AFS-DX 12/24mm f4G £799.99
AF-D 18/35mm f3.5/4.5 IF ED £299.99
AF-S 24/85 mm f3.5 G(IF) E £399.99
AF-S 17/35mm f2.8 D (IF) ED £1,099.99
AF-G 28/200mm f3.5/5.6IF ED £269.99
AF-D 28/105mm f3.5/4.5 IF £298.99
AF-S 24/120mm f3.5/5.6 VR £449.99
AF-D70/300 f4/5.6 ED £269.99
AF-G70/300 f4/5.6 £84.99

Minolta
17/35 2.8D £369.99
28/75D £299.99

Sigma
Canon, Nikon & Minolta
- 105 f2.8 DG Macro £299.99
- 150 f2.8 DG Macro £439.99
- 10-20 f4.5/5.6 DC £339.99
- 12-24 f4.5/5.6 £449.99
- 15-30 f3.5/4.5 £399.99
- 17-35 f2.8/4 DG £329.99
- 24-70 f2.8 DG £279.99
- 24-70 f2.8 DG Macro £299.99
- 28-70 f2.8 DG £229.99
- 18-50 f3.5/5.6 DC £79.99
- 18-50 f2.8 EX DC £309.99
- 18-125 f3.5/5.6 DC £199.99
- 18-200 f3.5/6.3 DC £269.99
- 24-60 f2.8 DG £299.99
- 20-40 f2.8 £378.99
- 24-70 f2.8 £289.99
- 24-135 f2.8/4 £249.99
- 28-105 f2.8/4 £159.99
- 28-200 f3.5/5.6 £159.99
- 28-300 f3.5/6.3 DG Macro £189.99
- 55-200 f4-5.6 DC £107.99
- 70-200 f2.8 APO DG £599.99
- 70-300 f4/5.6 APO £158.99
- 70-300 f4.5/6.3 DL £99.99
- 80-400 f4.5/5.6 OS £849.99
- 170-500 f5/6.3 £444.99
- 18-50/55-200DC Twin Kit £169.99
1.4x DG Teleconverter £139.99
2 x DG Teleconverter £179.99

Tamron
Canon, Nikon & Minolta
- 90 Macro f2.8 £249.99
- 90 Macro Di f2.8 £299.99
- 180 f3.5Di £529.99
- 18-200 f3.5/6.3 DI-II £279.99
- 17-35 f2.8/4 £329.99
- 19-35 f3.5/4.5 £179.99
- 28-200 f3.8/5.6 £159.99
- 28-300 f3.5/6.3 Di £229.99
- 28-75 f2.8 £269.99
- 70-300 f4.5/5.6 £99.99
- 200-500 f5.6/6.3 Di £779.99

Canon Accessories
BG-E2 Grip for 20D £129.99
BG-ED3 Grip for D60/10D £119.99
BG-E1 Grip for 300D £119.99
BG-E3 Grip for D350D £129.99
Speedlite 580EX £299.99
Speedlite 550EX £229.99
Speedlite 420 £169.99
Speedlite 220EX £129.99
EH16-L Case EOS300D £34.99
EH17-L Case EOS20D £34.99
EH18-LCase EOS350D £34.99
ACK-E2 for 10D/20D/D30/D60 £59.99
ACK-700 for 350D £44.99
BP511A Battery £49.49
NB-2L Battery £39.99

Nikon Accessories
CF-D70 Case £32.99
CF-D50 Case £32.99
ML-L3 Remote Control £14.99
SB-22S Flashgun £139.99
SB-50DX Flashgun £139.99
SB-600 Flashgun £169.99
SB-800 Flashgun £289.99
EN-EL3 £49.99

Konica Minolta Accessories
NP-400 Battery £49.99
AC-11 Mains Adaptor £49.99
RS-1000L Remote Cable £54.99
RC-1000S Remote Cable £34.99
RC-3IR Remote Control £19.99
VC-D7 Vertical Grip £149.99
CS-70 Case £49.00
Flashgun 3600HS(D) £139.99
Flashgun 5600HS(D) £259.99
Flashgun 2500(D) £99.99

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FREE SHIPPING

Canon
- Powershot A410 £99.95
- Powershot A95 £194.95
- Powershot A510 £139.95
- Powershot A520 £159.95
- Powershot A610 £209.95
- Powershot A620 £239.95
- Powershot G6 £379.95
- Powershot S60 £279.99
- Powershot S70 £289.68
- Powershot S80 £369.68
- Powershot S1 IS £239.95
- Powershot S2 IS £349.99
- Powershot Pro 1 £399.95
- Ixus i5 £189.99
- Ixus iZoom £229.99
- Ixus 30 £189.99
- Ixus 40 £199.99
- Ixus 50 £219.99
- Ixus 55 £239.99
- Ixus 700 £279.99
- Ixus 750 £319.99

Fuji
- A345 £129.99
- A350 £109.99
- F10 £239.99
- F440 £199.99
- F810 £269.99
- E550 £169.99
- S5600 £269.99
- S9500 £459.99

Konica Minolta
- A200 £379.99
- X1 £259.99
- Z5 £269.99
- Z5 Black £289.99
- Z6 £309.99
- Z10 £147.99
- Xg £149.99
- X60 £169.99
- E500 £119.99

Nikon
- S1 £209.99
- S2 £229.99
- S3 £259.99
- S4 £269.99
- P2 £239.99
- 4600 £114.95
- 5600 £139.95
- 7600 £209.95
- 7900 £239.95
- 8400 £399.95
- 8800 £369.95

Olympus
- C470 £126.99
- FE110 £129.95
- MJU500 £199.95
- MJU600 £199.95
- MJU800 £269.95
- MJU Mini Silver £139.95
- MJU Mini S £189.95
- MJU Mini Accessory Kit £39.95
- IR300 £203.95
- C770 £219.99
- C765 £159.99
- C7070 £369.99
- SP350 £269.95
- SP500 £259.95

Panasonic
- FZ30 £469.99
- FZ5 £269.99

Pentax
- Optio S55 £159.99
- Optio S55 £169.99
- Optio S5z £199.99
- Optio S6 £219.99
- Optio SVi £214.99
- Optio X £239.99
- Optio WP £199.99
- Optio WPi £209.99

COMPACT ACCESSORIES

Canon
Batteries & AC Adaptors
NB-1L Battery for Ixus £34.99
NB-4L Battery for Ixus 40/50 £29.99
NB-2/3L Battery for Powershot £39.99
NB-5H Battery for S10/S20 £29.99
BP-511 Battery for D60/10D/G5 £49.99
ACK500/600/700 £44.99
ACK-900 £29.99

Lenses & Accessories
WC-DC58 Wide G1/2 £99.99
WC-DC58N Wide G3/5 £99.99
TC-DC58 Tele G1/2 £69.99
TC-DC58N Tele G3/5 £69.99
LA-DC58 Lens Adapt. G1/2 £14.99
LA-DC58B Lens Adapt. G3/5 £14.99
TC-DC52 Tele A1/2/3/40/70 £79.99
TC-DC52A Tele A80 £69.99
TC-DC58A Tele Pro-1 £149.99
WC-DC52 Wide A1/2/3/4070/80 £69.99
LA-DC52B Lens Adapt. A30/40 £12.99
LA-DC52 Lens Adapt. A10/20 £12.99
LA-DC52C Lens Adapt. A70 £14.99
LA-DC52D Lens Adapt. A80 £14.99
LA-DC58C Lens Adapt. Pro-1 £49.99
LA-DC10 Lens Adapt+ S1 IS £24.99
WP-DC10 u/water for Ixus 2 ~~£139.99~~ £99

Fuji
Batteries & AC Adaptors
AC Mains Adaptor 3 or 5V £29.99
NP100 Battery £29.99
NP80 Battery ~~£42.99~~ £29
NP60 Battery £34.99
NP40 Battery £34.99
NP30 Battery £34.99
BC80 Charger £54.99
BC60 Charger £49.99

Lenses & Adaptors
WL-FX9 0.79x Wide Kit £89.99
TL-FX9 1.5x Tele Kit £89.99
AR-FX9 Filter and Lens Ring £26.99

Minolta
Batteries & AC Adaptors
NP-400 Battery £49.99
NP-700 Battery £29.99
NP-800 Battery £39.99
NP-900 Battery £19.99
BP-400 Battery Grip for A1/2 ~~£99.99~~ £50
Lithium Batteries F100/200/300 £19.99
Lithium Battery Dimage X £29.99
AC-2L Mains Adaptor £59.99
AC-11 Mains Adaptor ~~£49.99~~ £39
External Battery Kit EBP-100 £189.99

Accessories
RS-1000L Remote Cable £54.99
RC-1000S Remote Cable £34.99
RC-3IR Remote Control £19.99

Lenses
ZCW100 WA £69.99
ZCW200 WA £69.99
ZCW300 WA £79.99
ACW100 WA £139.99
ACT100 WA £139.99

Flashguns
Flashgun 3600HS(D) £139.99
Flashgun 5600HS(D) £259.99
Flashgun 2500(D) £99.99

Nikon
Accessories
SC-17TTL Sensor Cable £59.99
Multi Flash Bracket SK-E900 ~~£69.99~~ £50
Multi Flash Adaptor £44.99
MC-EU1 Remote Control £109.99
Slide Copier ES-E28 £79.99
Nikon Filterkit (4) 28mm £42.99
Nikon Filterkit (4) & Adaptor 5700 £119.99
MD-D100 Grip £239.99
MB-E5700 Grip ~~£119.99~~ £99

Batteries & AC Adaptors
EN-MH1-B2 £9.99
EN-EL1 £34.99
EN-EL2 £39.99
EN-EL7 £39.99
EN-4 £89.99
EH-30 ~~£49.99~~ £29
EH-31/EH21 ~~£49.99~~ £29
EH53AC £29.99
MH-16 Quick Charger £219.99

Lenses & Accessories
URE 2 - 12 Lens Rings each £9.99
Wideangle WC-E24 £69.99
Wideangle WC-E63 ~~£99.99~~ £79
Wideangle WC-E68 £119.99
Wideangle WC-E80 £129.99
Fisheye FC-E8 ~~£209.99~~ £169
Fisheye FC-E9 ~~£219.99~~ £179
Telephoto TC-E15ED ~~£129.99~~ £99
Telephoto TC-E2 £99.99
Telephoto TC-E3ED ~~£219.99~~ £179
HR-E5700 Lenshood £19.99
HN-CP10 Lenshood for 5400 £19.99

Olympus
Cases
Card Case - Leather £12.99
C5050z Leather £29.99
C5060z Leather ~~£24.99~~ £19
C50/60z Leather £24.99
C700 Series Leather £29.99
C2x/3x/3x/5x - Leather £29.99
MJU Leather De Luxe £24.99
MJU Leather - Standard £19.99
Compact Models Velvet £9.99
Compact Models Vinyl £12.99
E10/E20 - Leather £39.99

Batteries & AC Adaptors
AC Mains Adaptor C-6/7AG £49.99
Li-10B MJU/C50/C60 £29.99
PS-BLM1 E1/5060) £69.99
LB-01E £9.99
Li-12B £19.99
Li-30B £29.99

Accessories
RM-CB1 Remote Control £54.99
RM-1 Remote Control £19.99
Aqua Housing PFL-02 (FL20) £159.99
Aqua Housing PT-02 (C800) £39.99
Aqua Housing PT-014 (C50) £129.99
Aqua Housing PT-017 (C350) £89.99
Aqua Housing PT-019 (5000) £159.99
Aqua Housing PT-020 (5060) £159.99
Aqua Housing PT-021 (C360/460) £119.99
Aqua Housing PT-022 (C765/770) £159.99
Aqua Housing PT-023 (C8080) £189.99
Aqua Housing PT-024 (C765/770) £139.99
Aqua Housing PT-022 (C765/770) £159.99
Aqua Housing PT-026 (MJU500) £139.99
Aqua Housing PT-027 (C7070) £159.99

Flash
External Flash FL50 £299.99
External Flash FL36 £139.99
External Flash FL20 £119.99
FL-BX01 Flash Bracket £79.99
FL-CB02 Flash Cable £69.99
FL-CB01 Flash Extension £49.99

Lenses & Accessories
TCON14 Telephoto 1.4x ~~£49.99~~ £29
TCON17 Telephoto 1.7x ~~£89.99~~ £69
TCON17C Telephoto 1.7x ~~£109.99~~ £79
WCON 07 Wide 07x £139.99
WCON 07C Wide 07x £149.99
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8 megapixels, Image Stabiliser
£379.99
2 Year Warranty - Free Shipping

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18/70 **£549.95**
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Minolta 7D
Body Only
£679.99
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Canon 20D
Lens Kit 18/55 **£879.99**
Body only **£799.99**
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New Canon Photo Printer

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Lens Kit 18/55 **£599.99**
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£519.99
Body **£419.99** Free Shipping
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CLA-7 Adaptor....£34.99
CLA-6 Adaptor....£29.99
CLA-4/5 Adaptor....£19.99
TCON-14B 200 mm lens....£179.99
WCON-08B 28mm lens....£169.99
50/200(E1)....£699.99
5060 Filter UV/Pol/Protect....£29.99
5060 LCD Hood....£19.99

Pentax
Batteries & AC Adaptors
K AC-2E AC Adaptor....£39.99
KAC-12B AC Adaptor....~~£39.99~~ £29
KBC-8B AC Adaptor....~~£39.99~~ £29
DL-12 Battery....~~£29.99~~ £19
DL-17 Battery....£39.99
DL-18 Battery....£29.99

Sigma Flashguns
Canon or Nikon
- EF500 Super DG TTL....£149.99
- EF500 ST DG TTL....£99.99
- EM 140 DG Ring Flash Macro ..£269.99

Neg & Slide Scanners
MINOLTA
- Scan Dual 4....£219.99
- Scan Elite 5400....£459.99
- Scan Elite 5400 II....£499.99
- Scan Multi II....£799.99
- AD-10 APS Adaptor....£79.99

NIKON
- Coolscan V....£449.99
- Coolscan 5000....£779.99
- Coolscan 9000....£1999.99
- IA20(S) APS Adaptor....£169.99

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iScan 3600....£99.99
SilverScan 3600....£119.99
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Crystalscan 7200....£179.99
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ProScan 4000....£299.99
RPS 3600....£299.99
RPS 7200....£359.99
DigitDia 4000....£579.99

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- 4200F....£89.99
- 5200F....£99.99
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- 8400F....£129.99
- 9950F....£279.99

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- 2480 Photo....£69.99
- 2580 Photo....£89.99
- 1660 Photo....£129.99
- 3170 Photo....£129.99
- 4990 Photo....£339.99

MICROTEK
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- 4900 Plus....~~£99.99~~ £90
- 6800....£299.99
- i700....£289.99
- i900....£569.99

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- Pixma IP4000R....£149.99
- Pixma IP5000....£119.99
- Pixma IP6000D....£129.99
- Pixma IP8500....£239.99
- i6500....£279.99
- Pixma IP90....£184.99
- DS700....£99.99

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- PictureMate 500....£164.99
- Photo R200....£79.99
- Photo R300....£99.99
- Photo R300 Monitor....£119.99
- Photo R320....£134.99
- Photo R800....£218.99
- Photo 1800....£359.99
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- SELPHY CP600....£149.99
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4 GB Hitachi Travel Kit....£279.99
Travel Kits....~~£10.99~~ £9

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5 Year Warranty
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256MB 12 x speed....£24 99
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512MB 40 x speed....£39.99
1GB 40 x speed....£69.99
2GB 40 x speed....£139.99
512MB 80 x speed....£44.99
1GB 80 x speed Pro....£74.99
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10 Year Warranty
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1gig CF Ultra II....£74.99
2gig CF Ultra II....£169.99
1gig CF Extreme III....£89.99
2gig CF Extreme III....£179.99
256mb SD Ultra II....£39.49
1gig SD Ultra II....£79.99
1gig SD Extreme III....£89.99

Smart Media
10 Year Warranty
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32MB....£12.99
64MB....£19.99
128MB....£29.99

Lexar Memory Stick
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1Gig Pro....£99.80

Secure Digital
10 Year Warranty
32MB 12x Speed....£9.99
64MB 12x Speed....£13.49
128MB 12x Speed....£17.49
256mb 12x Speed....£24.49
512mb 12x Speed....£34.49
1Gig 12x Speed....£59.99
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512mb....£49.49
1gig....£69.49
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USB for CF •CF2 MD SM....£9.99
USB for MS •CF CF2 MD....£9.99
PARALLEL PORT for SM only....£19.99
PARALLEL PORT for CF only....£19.99
MICROTECH ZIO SM orCF....£9.99
FUJI FIREWIRE DUAL CF/SM....£39.99
LEXAR 8-IN-1 READER....£19.99
LEXAR Memory Stick Reader....£10
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SANDISK SD/MM USB2....£19.99

General Accessories
Ohnar Digi Slide Duplicator....£69.99
Ohnar Digi Zoom Slide Duplicator £89.99
Sunpak Remotelite 2 Flash....£29.99

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Optics First Aid Kit....£18.95
Camera CleanCam Kit....£10.95
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Pocket Tripod....£4.99
Velbon CX-444....£29.99
Velbon CX-560....£39.99
Velbon Maxi 347E....£49.99
VelbonMini-2....£19.99
Velbon UB-40 Monopod....£19..99
Velbon UB-43 Monopod....£27.99
Slik XL....£19.99
Manfrotto 714SHB....£79.99
Manfrotto 714B....£74.99
Manfrotto 719B....£79.99
Manfrotto 719SHB....£89.99

Filters
Cokin Digital Filter Kit G300....£19.99
Cokin Digital Filter Kit G350....£24.99
Cokin Digital Filter Kit G400....£34.99
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43mm Lens Protection....£12.99
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Hoya 43mm Pol....£18.99
Hoya 49mm UV/Haze....£8.99
Hoya 49mm Skylight 1B....£9.99
Hoya 49mm Pol....£18.99
Hoya 49mm Warm CPol....£38.99
Hoya 49mm Infra Red R72....£28.99
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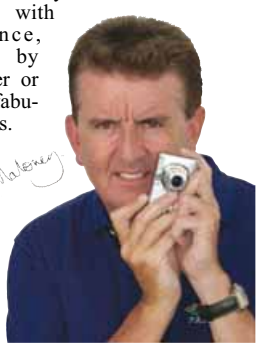

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* Antishake
* 18-70 DT Lines

IXUS 750
Canon

* 7.1 Mega Pixel
* 3x Optical
* PIC Bridge
* 2.5" LCD

IXUS 55
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* 5 Mega Pixel
* 6.5 Digital Zoom
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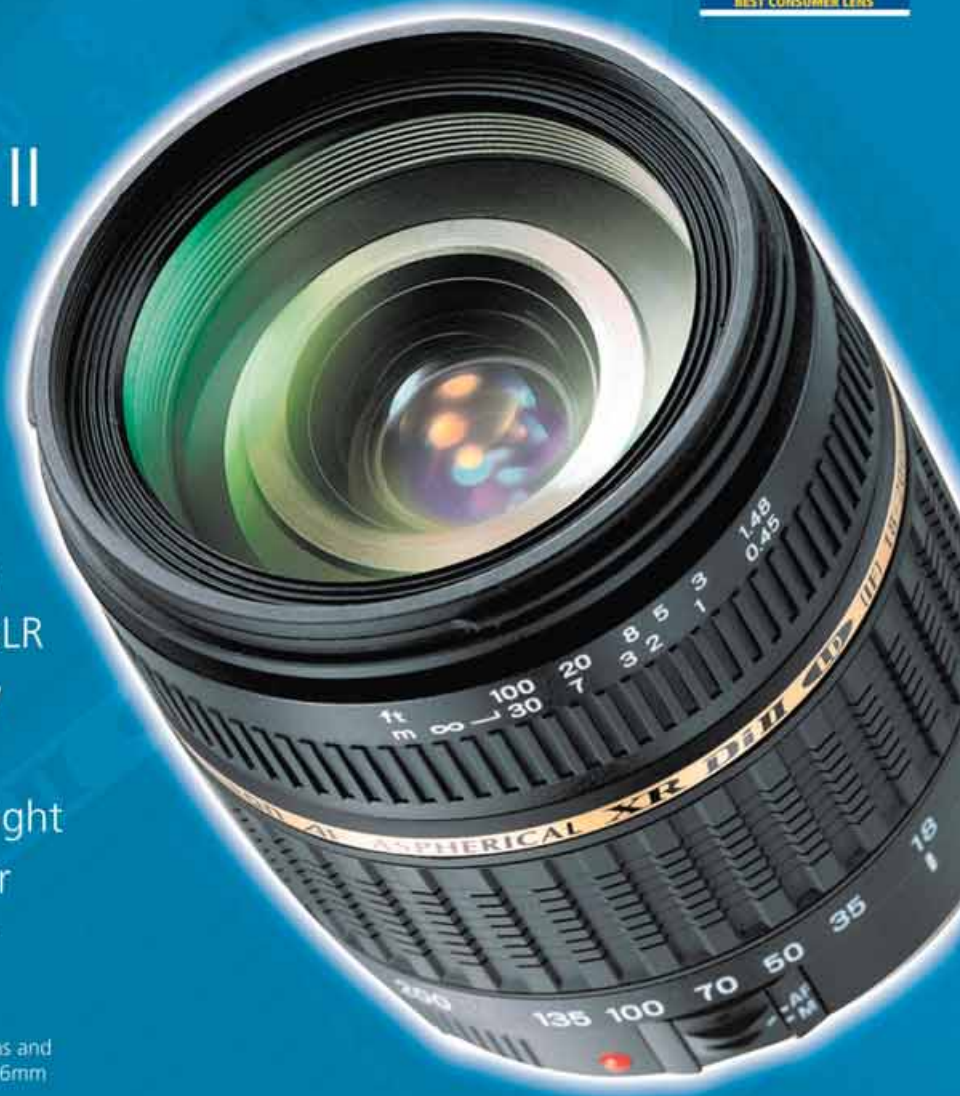

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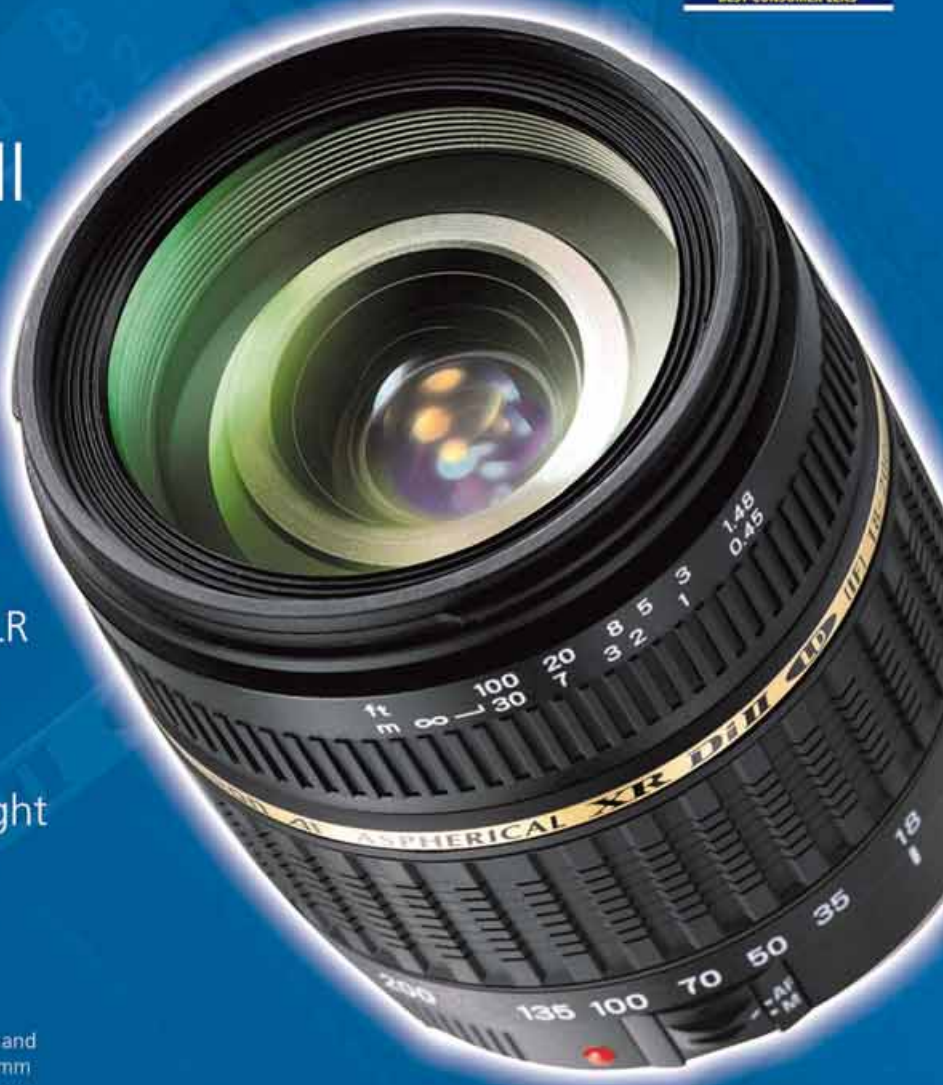

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128MB	16.40
256MB	21.90
128MB DUO	16.40

LEXAR — Secure Digital Card

128MB	10.90
256MB	15.60
512MB	20.90
1GB	48.90

LEXAR — Card Readers

Compactflash USB 2.0	10.90
12in1 USB 2.0	17.90
Single Slot Reader	14.70

SONY — Sony Memory Stick

256 MB PRO	28.90
512 MB PRO	44.20
1GB PRO	77.50
256 MB PRO DUO	26.90
512 MB PRO DUO	38.90
1GB PRO DUO	64.90

Kingston — Compact Flash

128MB	8.90
256MB	11.90
512MB	20.90
1GB	37.20
512MB Elite 50x	23.40
1GB Elite 50x	39.90
2GB Elite 50x	73.90
4GB Elite 50x	157.50

Kingston — Secure Digital

128MB	8.90
256MB	11.70
512MB	19.99
1GB	37.90
256MB Elite 50x	13.60
512MB Elite 50x	24.20
1GB Elite 50x	42.20
Ultimate 1GB 133x	74.90
Ultimate 2GB 120x	107.60

Kingston — Multimedia

256MB MMCMobile	11.90
512MB MMCMobile	24.90
1GB MMC+	36.70
2GB MMC+	89.90

Kingston — USB Pen Drive

128MB	8.45
256MB	12.90
512MB	19.90
1GB	39.90

FUJIFILM — Fuji Compact Flash

256MB 40x	15.90
512MB 40x	26.90
1GB 40x	42.40

Fuji xD

64MB	9.90
128MB	10.70
256MB	16.90
512MB	29.90
1GB	47.90

OLYMPUS — Olympus xD

64MB	9.30
128MB	11.60
256MB	17.90
512MB	33.80
1GB	48.40

Generic Card Readers

SmartMedia	5.99
Compactflash	5.99
Compactflash USB 2.0	7.90
Memory Stick	5.99
Secure Digital	5.99
Secure Digital USB 2.0	7.90
xD	5.99
ALLin1 USB 2.0	7.90

ALL MAJOR CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED

Battery Chargers

Uniross Sprint Ultra Fast Charger	23.90
Uniross Globetrotter	18.90
Uniross Sprint 1HR Charger	21.90
Uniross Sprint 90MIN Charger	24.90
Uniross Express 700	19.90
Encore Fast Charger + 4x 2300mah	17.99
Encore Classic + 4x 2300mah	9.99
Ansmann Digispeed 4	38.90
Uniross CRV3	19.90
Uniross CR123A	19.90

Rechargeable Batteries

Ansmann AA 2500 mAh 4-Pack	13.90
Ansmann AA 2600 mAh 4-Pack	14.90
Uniross AA 2300 mAh 4-Pack	6.90
Uniross AA2500 mAh 4-Pack	7.90
Uniross AAA 800 mAh 4-Pack	6.90
Hahnel AAA 800 mAh 4-Pack	7.90
Hahnel AA 2000 mAh 4-Pack	6.90
CR123A / CR2 / 2CR5	9.99
Uniross CRV3	12.90

DVDR

Datawrite 8x DVD-R Yellow x50	9.49
Bulkpaq 8x DVD+R x50	8.99
Datawrite 4x DVD-R x50	8.49
Verbatim 8x DVD+R x25	10.75
Bulkpaq 8x DVD-R x50	6.49
Datawrite Classic 8x DVD-R Yellow x50	8.49

Equivalent - Camera Batteries

Nikon EN EL1	14.95
Nikon EN EL2	13.45
Nikon EN EL3	14.90
Nikon EN EL4	19.90
Nikon EN EL5	17.90
Nikon EN EL7	19.90
Minolta NP200	12.90
Minolta NP400	24.90
Minolta NP500	16.90
Minolta NP700	18.90
Minolta NP800	14.95
Olympus LI-10B	13.90
Olympus LI-12B	15.90
Olympus LI-30B	19.90
Olympus BLM1	18.70
Fuji NP 30 LB	19.90
Fuji NP 40 LB	12.70
Fuji NP 60 LB	10.70
Fuji NP 80 LB	10.70
Fuji NP 120 LB	22.90
Canon BP 511	17.90
Canon NB 1LH	13.90
Canon NB 2L	14.90
Canon NB 3L	15.00
Canon NB 4L	14.90
Canon NB 5H	14.90
Kyocera BP1000S	15.90
Sony NP-FC10/11	29.00
Sony FM-50	18.60

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Over the following pages you'll find the specifications and ratings of more than 190 cameras, printers, scanners, software programs and accessories...

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA

Welcome to the UK's best digital photography Buying Guide. Here you'll find the specifications and our verdicts on the UK's top 100 digital cameras, plus the most popular accessories.

If it isn't here it's either not good enough, discontinued (though it may still be available from some dealers) or too new to have been tested yet. (It can sometimes take a few weeks for a test to appear, depending on space, publishing schedules, and when we get the sample.)

Products are judged by how well they serve their market. Those that score 85% or more in our tests are awarded the coveted WDC Choice rosette.

With many more accessories available than we have the space for, we concentrate on the best-quality products from the most respected brands in their field. All have been chosen and tested with the enthusiast in mind.

The Buyers' Guide should help you choose the right product for you. But for more information why not read the full test report first? A pdf or reprint of every camera test, including the full specs and ratings, can be emailed or faxed to you for just £3.00 by calling 01707 273 773 or visiting our website.

Alternatively, you can order a back issue from: John Denton Services, Unit One, A1 Parkway, South Gate Way, Orton Southgate, Peterborough, PE2 6YN. Telephone: 01733 370800. Better still, why not take out a subscription to What Digital Camera and be the first to read the full tests on every new camera and accessory – and get loads of technique and inspiration into the bargain? Call 0845 676 7778 for the latest deals and to sign up. **WDC**

Using This Guide

UP TO £200 | £200 - £300 | £300 - £400 | £400 - £600 | £600 - £7000

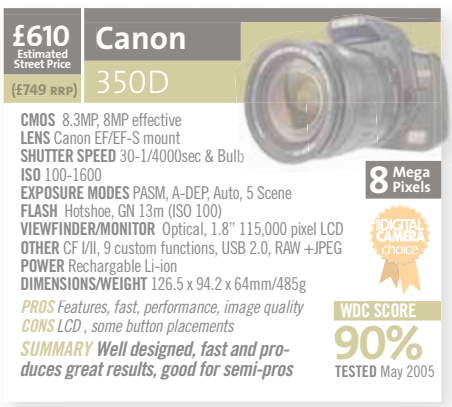
STREET PRICE
Estimated street price at time of press. (Prices may vary)

RRP
The price at launch. Test rating based on this price

SPECIFICATION LIST
The key features you should check when comparing models

EXPOSURE MODES
P= Program, A = Aperture priority, S= Shutter priority, M = Manual

SUMMARY
A precis of our test verdict


£610
Estimated Street Price
(£749 RRP)
Canon
350D
CMOS 8.3MP, 8MP effective
LENS Canon EF/EF-S mount
SHUTTER SPEED 30-1/4000sec & Bulb
ISO 100-1600
EXPOSURE MODES PASM, A-DEP, Auto, 5 Scene
FLASH Hotshoe, GN 13m (ISO 100)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical, 1.8" 115,000 pixel LCD
OTHER CF I/II, 9 custom functions, USB 2.0, RAW +JPEG
POWER Rechargable Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 126.5 x 94.2 x 64mm/485g
8 Mega Pixels
PROS Features, fast, performance, image quality
CONS LCD , some button placements
SUMMARY Well designed, fast and produces great results, good for semi-pros
WDC SCORE
90%
TESTED May 2005

MAKE AND MODEL
Cameras are listed in ascending order of price

SENSOR SIZE
How many megapixels? A guide to image quality

AWARDS
A gold rosette is given for highly recommended models

OVERALL SCORE
Total score out of 100, plus date model was tested

About the Ratings

RATINGS Products are rated out of 20 by five criteria which, when combined, provide a mark out of a hundred.
FEATURES How well specified is the product? Does it have all the features that you're likely to need?
DESIGN Is the design stylish or ugly? Comfortable or awkward? Functional or impractical? Design is about handling as well as looks.
PERFORMANCE How does it handle? Are the buttons well placed? Is the menu simple? Is it responsive or sluggish?
QUALITY How are the results? Sharp or soft? Is the colour accurate? Do the images suffer from noise, fringing, distortion?
VALUE Is it competitively priced? How does it compare with its nearest rivals? Our scores are based upon the retail price at launch (RRP).
In this volatile market prices change almost monthly, and as cameras become cheaper they inevitably become better value. It would be impractical and confusing to change the scores every month, so we include the RRP along with the current average street price. Where there's a big difference it can be assumed that the product is now better value than when it was tested, but also that it may be coming towards the end of its natural shelf life. Highly recommended cameras receive the WDC rosette.

TAKE THE 360° VIRTUAL TOUR

On The Web

You'll find product photos and 360° Quicktime tours of virtually every current camera, plus sample test images taken by our reviewers for you to view or download. You can also buy tests or back issues online, or subscribe. In addition you'll find daily news on all the latest product launches, reader forums, a gallery for your own pictures, plus loads of features and techniques, useful links, competitions, events listings, bookshop and lots more, just visit www.whatdigitalcamera.com

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA
www.whatdigitalcamera.com

£85 Estimated Street Price (£99 RRP) — HP M22

CCD 4.05MP effective
LENS 37mm f/2.8-6.5
SHUTTER SPEED 15-1/1800sec
ISO Auto, 100-400
EXPOSURE MODES P + 8 scene
FLASH Built-in, Auto plus 4
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/1.5inch 61,600 pixel Active Matrix
OTHER 320x240 24fps Video, SD/MMC, ±3EV in 1/3EV steps
POWER 2x AA
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 96 x 29 x 49mm/120g

4 Mega Pixels

PROS Ease of use, size
CONS Limited features, slow, digital zoom only
SUMMARY ***No optical zoom and little control, but delivers in image quality***

WDC SCORE **80%** TESTED Oct 2005

£90 Estimated Street Price (£120 RRP) — Olympus 370

CCD 3.2MP
LENS 38-114mm f/2.9 – 5.0
SHUTTER SPEED 2-1/2000sec
ISO Auto 100-400
EXPOSURE MODES Auto, Prog AE, 4 Scene modes
FLASH GN 11
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/1.5in LCD
OTHER xD, 320x240 movies to limit of storage, USB interface
POWER 2x AA or NiMH rechargeable AAs
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 87.5 x 62.5 x 38.5mm/140g

3 Mega Pixels

PROS Design, easy to use, price, excellent 2cm macro
CONS No optical viewfinder, noisy images
SUMMARY ***Simple to use and capable considering the price***

WDC SCORE **82%** TESTED Apr 2005

£110 Estimated Street Price (£110 RRP) — HP M417

CCD 5.19MP
LENS 36-108mm f/2.9-4.9
SHUTTER SPEED 2-1/2000sec
ISO Auto, 100-400
EXPOSURE MODES P +7 scene
FLASH Built-in
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/1.8in
OTHER 320x240 24fps Video, SD storage media
POWER 2xAA
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 96 x 29 x 49mm/120g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Resolution, AA batteries accepted
CONS Unspectacular image quality, slow
SUMMARY ***OK, but not stunning, a camera made to price rather than specification***

WDC SCORE **78%** TESTED Oct 2005

£120 Estimated Street Price (£149 RRP) — Nikon 4600

CCD 3.9MP effective
LENS 34-102mm equiv
SHUTTER SPEED 4-1/3000sec
ISO Auto
EXPOSURE MODES P, Sc, Mov, ±2EV
FLASH GN 3.3m
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Yes/1.8inch
OTHER SD, Best Shot Selector, auto & manual focus, USB
POWER 2x AA
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 85 x 60 x 35mm/130g

4 Mega Pixels

PROS Simple to use, good price, punchy results
CONS Maybe too basic, difficulty resolving fine detail
SUMMARY ***Very basic and easy to use, produces punchy images***

WDC SCORE **81%** TESTED May 2005

£125 Estimated Street Price (£200 RRP) — Fujifilm E500

CCD 4.1MP
LENS 28-91mm equiv, F2.9-5.5
SHUTTER SPEED 2-1/2000sec
ISO 80, 100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES P,A,S,M, Auto, 4 Sc modes
FLASH 4.1m(W)-2.0m(T)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical/2.0in LCD
OTHER PictBridge, USB 1.1, xD-Picture cards
POWER 2xAA
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 101 x 60.5 x 32.6mm/225g

4 Mega Pixels

PROS Handling, features, price
CONS Slow connection, purple fringing
SUMMARY ***It's got a lot going for it but is let down by the image quality***

WDC SCORE **82%** TESTED Feb 2005

£130 Estimated Street Price (£230 RRP) — Fujifilm S3500

CCD 4.0MP
LENS 39-234mm f2.8-8.2
SHUTTER SPEED 2-1/1500sec
ISO Auto between 64 and 250
EXPOSURE MODES Auto, Prog AE, four scene modes
FLASH Built-in, GN 10
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR EVF/1.5in
OTHER xD, +/-0.6 EV, 320x240 video in 60sec clips, Pictbridge
POWER 4xAA alkaline supplied or rechargeable Ni-MH cells
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 99x77.3x69.3mm/285g

4 Mega Pixels

PROS Easy to use, good metering
CONS Barrelling, EVF and LCD freeze while focusing
SUMMARY ***An uncomplicated point and shooter with a long lens***

WDC SCORE **79%** TESTED Awards 04

£140 Estimated Street Price (£200 RRP) — KonicaMinolta Z10

CCD 3.2MP
LENS 36-290mm
SHUTTER SPEED 15-1/2000sec & B
ISO Auto, 64,100,200,400
EXPOSURE MODES P,A,S,M, Auto, Sc
FLASH 5.2m
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Dual EVF/ 1.5in
OTHER SD card, Movie w/sound, 1.5fps
POWER 4xAA
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 109 x 82 x 94mm/400g

3 Mega Pixels

PROS Image quality, features
CONS Recording time, small LCD
SUMMARY ***The Z0-range is improving and is versatile but don't expect fine art prints***

WDC SCORE **84%** TESTED Nov 2004

£160 Estimated Street Price (£239 RRP) — Canon A520

CCD 4.2MP total, 4.0MP effective
LENS 34-140mm (equiv) f2.6 – 5.5
SHUTTER SPEED 15-1/2000sec
ISO 50-400
EXPOSURE MODES M, A, S, P, 5 pic modes, 8 scene modes
FLASH Built in
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical/1.8-inch LCD
OTHER SD
POWER 2x AA cells
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 91 x 64 x 38.5mm/180g

4 Mega Pixels

PROS Accomplished performer
CONS Could be quicker and quieter
SUMMARY ***Assured performace by a capable camera, producing fine images***

WDC SCORE **86%** TESTED July 2005

£170 Estimated Street Price (£250 RRP) — Olympus Mju-Mini

CCD 4MP
LENS 35-70mm
SHUTTER SPEED 4-1/1000sec
ISO 64, 100, 200, 400 (500 for candle scene mode)
EXPOSURE MODES P, Sc (13), Mov
FLASH GN 5.4m @wide/auto
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/1.8in
OTHER xD, unlimited video/sound, weatherproof, 6 colours
POWER Li-Ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 95x 55.5 x 27.5mm/115g

4 Mega Pixels

PROS Design, ease of use, colours
CONS Limited functions, limited zoom, handling
SUMMARY ***A reasonable snapper, it is cool and classy but limited for the enthusiast***

WDC SCORE **81%** TESTED Special 04

£170 Estimated Street Price (£230 RRP) — Olympus FE 5500

CCD 4.9MP effective, 5.3MP total
LENS 35-105mm f/2.8-4.8
SHUTTER SPEED 2-1/2000sec
ISO A, 80, 100, 200, 400, 800 (1.8MP)
EXPOSURE MODES A, scene
FLASH 3.5m (W) / 5m (T)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/2-inch TFT 115,000 pixels
OTHER xD, Pictbridge, 14MB int
POWER Li-Ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 94 x 61 x 24mm/175g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Easy to use, good for snapshots
CONS Uninspiring, fringing, cold colour
SUMMARY ***Average, if uninspiring beginner model with interesting lens construction***

WDC SCORE **82%** TESTED Nov 2005

£170 Estimated Street Price (£199 RRP) — HP R717

CCD 6.4MP total, 6.2MP effective
LENS 39-117mm equiv f2.8-4.9
SHUTTER SPEED 16 – 1/2000th sec
ISO Auto, 50, 100, 200, 320
EXPOSURE MODES: A, AP, 10 scene modes
FLASH Built in 5m (W) 2.8m (T)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical/1.8in
OTHER SD/MMC, 32Mb int, USB, 320x240pixel MPEG1 movies
POWER Li-ion battery
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 98.5 x 35.3 x60mm/180g

6 Mega Pixels

PROS Ease of use, Real Imaging Technology
CONS Limited macro mde, images lack punch
SUMMARY ***Easy to operate, but speed and picture quality are not perfect***

WDC SCORE **83%** TESTED Aug 2005

£170 Estimated Street Price (£200 RRP) — Panasonic LZ1

CCD 4.2MP CCD, 4.0 MP effective
LENS 37-222mm
SHUTTER SPEED 8 – 1/2000sec
ISO A, 64, 100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES Program, Scene modes, Mov
FLASH Built in
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/2in LCD
OTHER SD, Image stabilisation
POWER 2x AA (NiMH recommended)
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 101 x 64 x 33mm/224g

4 Mega Pixels

PROS Zoom range, image stabilisation, price
CONS Focus can miss sometimes, low ISO
SUMMARY ***Good specifications and features make this a great-value camera***

WDC SCORE **88%** TESTED June 2005

£170 Estimated Street Price (£229 RRP) — KonicaMinolta X60

CCD 5.4MP total /5.0 MP effective
LENS 38-114mm (equiv) f/3.3 – 4.0
SHUTTER SPEED 4-1/1000sec
ISO A, 50, 100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES A, P, 6 scene modes
FLASH Built in
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/2.5in LCD
OTHER 15Mb internal memory, SD, 3 filters
POWER Li-ion cell
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 83.5 x 56 x 22mm/115g

4 Mega Pixels

PROS Large LCD size, fast startup
CONS Limited features, image noise
SUMMARY ***Despite limited features, this is quick, easy to operate and capable***

WDC SCORE **83%** TESTED Sept 2005

£180 Estimated Street Price (£230 RRP) — Ricoh R1V

CCD 5.2MP (total) 5.1MP (Effective)
LENS 28-135mm equiv f/3.3-4.8
SHUTTER SPEED 8-1/2000sec
ISO 64-800 plus auto
EXPOSURE MODES: P, plus 6 Scene modes
FLASH Built-in GN 9m at ISO100
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR 1.8in LCD
OTHER 1cm macro focusing, text recording mode
POWER 2xAA/LiIon cell
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 100 x 55 x 25mm/150g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Build, focal length range, excellent macro
CONS Images a bit grainy
SUMMARY ***Well built, with decent feature set, image grain is disappointing***

WDC SCORE **83%** TESTED May 2005

£180 Estimated Street Price (£349 RRP) — Nikon 4800

CCD 4.0MP eff
LENS 36-300mm f/2.7 – f/4.4
SHUTTER SPEED 4 – 1/2000th sec
ISO Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES Auto, Program & 11 scene modes
FLASH GN 12
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR EVF / 1.8in
OTHER SD/MMC, 13.5MB internal, USB2.0 (Full Speed),640x480 video
POWER EN-EL1 Li-ion battery pack (supplied)
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 106 x 66 x 54mm/255g

4 Mega Pixels

PROS Handling, excellent optics, metering and AF
CONS Plastic build, noisy images
SUMMARY ***Impressively specified in a a small body, but images are noisy***

WDC SCORE **80%** TESTED Feb 2005

THE BUYERS' GUIDE

cameras up to £200

£180 Estimated Street Price (£250 RRP) — Olympus mju Mini S

CCD 5.4MP (total) 5MP (Effective)
LENS 35-70mm (equiv) f/3.5-4.9
SHUTTER SPEED 1/2-1/1000sec
ISO 64-400 plus auto
EXPOSURE MODES P, Sc, Movie
FLASH Built-in GN 5.4
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR No viewfinder/1.8in LCD
OTHER xD, Histogram, three colours
POWER Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 95 x 55.5 x 275mm/115g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Black finish very tactile
CONS Images better then expected but not perfect
SUMMARY ***Style over substance, adequate images with some decent features***

WDC SCORE **81%** TESTED July 2005

£180 Estimated Street Price (£249 RRP) — Pentax WP

CCD 5MP (Effective)
LENS f3.3-4.0 / 38-114mm
SHUTTER SPEED 4 – 1/2000 sec
ISO Auto, 100-400
EXPOSURE MODES Program, 18 Sc, Mov
FLASH 0.13m - 2.5m range
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR No viewfinder/2-inch TFT colour
OTHER SD, Underwater to 5m
POWER Lithium-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 102 x 51 x 22mm/120g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Relatively simple, good underwater camera
CONS No underwater white balance, reliance on scenes
SUMMARY ***There are better cameras, but this is quirky and fun, a holiday camera***

WDC SCORE **83%** TESTED Sept 2005

£180 Estimated Street Price (£350 RRP) — Canon Ixus 40

CCD 4.0 MP effective
LENS 35 - 105mm f/2.8 – f/4.9
SHUTTER SPEED 15 – 1/1500th sec
ISO Auto, 50/100/200/400
EXPOSURE MODES: Auto, P, M, 7 Scene modes, +/-2EV
FLASH GN 11
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical/2in
OTHER SD/MMC, 640x480 30fps video, USB, Pictbridge
POWER NB-4L Li-ion rechargeable battery pack
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 86 x 53 x 20.7mm/130g

4 Mega Pixels

PROS Great image quality, metering & AF, manual control
CONS Blurred viewfinder, weak memory card bay cover
SUMMARY ***Small, stylish and simple, yet capable of excellent results***

WDC SCORE **86%** TESTED Apr 2005

£190 Estimated Street Price (£250 RRP) — Samsung i5

CCD 5MP effective, 5.1MP total
LENS 39 - 117mm f/3.5 – f/4.5
SHUTTER SPEED 16 – 1/2000 sec
ISO Auto, 100/200/400
EXPOSURE MODES A, M, 11 scene
FLASH 0.2m - 2.4m (W)/ 0.3-1.9m (T)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None / 2.5in LCD
OTHER SD, 30fps video, movie with stabiliser
POWER Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 89.6 x 59.8 x 17.3mm/133g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Fast start-up, feature set
CONS Over-complicated menu
SUMMARY ***Good looking and well featured, but the menu systems are tricky***

WDC SCORE **82%** TESTED Nov 2005

£190 Estimated Street Price (£199 RRP) — Acer CR8530

CCD 8.1MP effective
LENS 36-108mm f2.8-4.8
SHUTTER SPEED 1/2 – 1/500 sec
ISO Auto, 50, 100, 200
EXPOSURE MODES Auto, Program, A, S, M, 3 scene modes
FLASH 0.5m –2.7m range
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical/2.5in
OTHER SD/MMC
POWER Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 91 x 57 x 27mm /150g

8 Mega Pixels

PROS Price, wide range of features
CONS Menu hard to see, restricting features
SUMMARY ***Decent feature set but controls are fiddly and picture quality variable***

WDC SCORE **78%** TESTED Sept 2005

£190 Estimated Street Price (£275 RRP) — Olympus IR-300

CCD 5MP
LENS 38-114mm f3.3-4.0
SHUTTER SPEED 4 - 1/2000 sec
ISO Auto
EXPOSURE MODES: P, plus 17 Scene modes
FLASH 0.3m-2.6m (W) 0.5m-2.1m (T) GN 6.0
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/2in
OTHER xD
POWER Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 99 x 53 x 22mm /112g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Lightweight, easy to operate
CONS No ISO control, editing features fair, manual on the CD
SUMMARY ***Takes decent photos, but overall a very average, over-priced camera***

WDC SCORE **82%** TESTED Oct 2005

£190 Estimated Street Price (£279 RRP) — Sony W5

CCD 5.25MP CCD, 5.1 MP effective
LENS f2.8-5.2 38-114 mm
SHUTTER SPEED 30 – 1/1000sec
ISO Auto, 100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES Program, Manual, 7 scene modes
FLASH Built in 0.2-4.5 (W) 0.3-2.5 (T)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical/2.5-inch
OTHER MS, MS Pro, 32Mb int
POWER Nikon EN-EL8
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 91 x 60 x 37.1mm/253g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS LCD screen, fast operation, sturdy build
CONS No separate playback button, less effective in low light
SUMMARY ***Sturdy, quick and produces good images – a family compact***

WDC SCORE **86%** TESTED Aug 2005

£190 Estimated Street Price (£320 RRP) — Canon A95

CCD 5.0MP effective
LENS 38–114mmf2/8-4.9
SHUTTER SPEED 15-1/2000sec
ISO Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES Auto, P,A,S,M, 6 subject, 8 scene modes
FLASH GN 11
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR OPT/1.8in
OTHER CF I&II, 2fps, up to 18-frame buffer, 640x480 video
POWER 4xAA alkaline supplied, or Ni-MH rechargeable batteries
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 101x64.6x38mm/235g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Easy to use, excellent metering, full spec
CONS AiAF niggles, slow startup, lacks TIFF & RAW
SUMMARY ***A great little performer with a great little price tag***

WDC SCORE **86%** TESTED Special 04

£200 Estimated Street Price (£280 RRP) — Olympus Mju 500

CCD 5MP effective
LENS 35-105mm f/3.1-5.6
SHUTTER SPEED 4-1/1000sec
ISO 64-640
EXPOSURE MODES P, Sc, Mov, ±2EV
FLASH GN 7.8
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/ 2.5in TFT
OTHER xD, PictBridge, 1.5fps for 4 frames
POWER Li-Ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 99 x 55.5 x 31mm/165g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Build quality, image colour & sharpness, LCD
CONS Some image noise, limited control
SUMMARY ***Weatherproof and simple to use, with a great LCD screen***

WDC SCORE **87%** TESTED Apr 2005

£200 Estimated Street Price (£299 RRP) — Nikon 5900

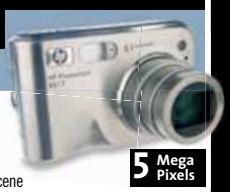
CCD 5.1MP effective, 5.26 total
LENS 38-114mm f/2.8-4.9
SHUTTER SPEED 4-1/2000sec
ISO Auto, 64-400
EXPOSURE MODES P, 18 Scene, ±2EV
FLASH Built-in, Auto plus 3 modes
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR optical/ 2in, 115,000 pixel TFT
OTHER 640x480 pixels 15fps Video, SD, 13.5Mb int
POWER Li-Ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 88 x 60 x 36.5 mm/150g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Ease of use for the less-experienced user
CONS A little prone to camera shake
SUMMARY ***An almost perfect example of a camera that can grow with the user***

WDC SCORE **85%** TESTED Nov 2005

£200 Estimated Street Price (£250 RRP) — HP R817



CCD 5.31MP total, 5.1MP effective
LENS 36-180mm
SHUTTER SPEED 15-1/2000sec
ISO Auto, 50-400
EXPOSURE MODES M, A, S, P, Auto, Scene
FLASH 3.8-8m
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/2inch 153,000 pixels
OTHER Real Life Technologies, SD, JPEG, PictBridge
POWER Li-ion battery
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 91 x 30 x 57mm/ 190g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Good feature set, easy to use, value for money
CONS ISO 200+ noise, video mode, spoilable finish
SUMMARY ***Specifications and features make it attractive for the first-time buyer***

WDC SCORE **86%** TESTED Nov 2005

£200 Estimated Street Price (£350 RRP) — Kodak Dx7630

CCD 6.1MP eff
LENS 39-117mm
SHUTTER SPEED 64-1/1000sec
ISO 100, 200, 400, 800
EXPOSURE MODES: P, A, S, M, Scenes
FLASH GN 4.2m @auto/wide
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical/2.2in
OTHER QuickTime movie mode
POWER 3.7V Li-ion battery
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 103 x 69.2 x 40.2mm/ /219g

6 Mega Pixels

PROS Quick accurate AF, build, ergonomic design
CONS Only 3x zoom, tiny viewfinder, zoom control
SUMMARY ***Compact, easy to use and produces very good images***

WDC SCORE **85%** TESTED Aug 2004

£200 Estimated Street Price (£380 RRP) — Fujifilm E550

CCD 6.3MP
LENS 32.5 – 130 mm
SHUTTER SPEED 3sec-1/2000sec
ISO 80/100/200/400/800
EXPOSURE MODES P,A,S,M,Sc, Mov, ±2EV
FLASH 4.5m (W) 2.2m (T)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR OPT/2in
OTHER xD, ISO 800 @3MP Resolution
POWER 2xAA
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 105x 63 x 34.4 mm/200g

6 Mega Pixels

PROS 6MP sensor, LCD, handling
CONS 12MP output quality, noise above ISO200
SUMMARY ***A rather nice camera with plenty of options for the enthusiast***

WDC SCORE **85%** TESTED Jan 2005

£200 Estimated Street Price (£250 RRP) — Pentax S5z

CCD 5MP
LENS 35 - 107mm f/2.6 – 4.8
SHUTTER SPEED 4-1/2000 sec
ISO A, 80, 100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES P, 15 scene modes
FLASH 0.2-3.5m (W) 0.2-3m (T)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/2.5in LCD
OTHER Pictbridge, SD, 9.3Mb int
POWER Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 83 x 52 x 21.5mm/120g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Big range of scene modes, small dimensions
CONS LCD hard to see in sun, slow start, plastic tripod bush
SUMMARY ***Capable of some good shots, but it isn't very fast***

WDC SCORE **83%** TESTED Oct 2005

£200 Estimated Street Price (£250 RRP) — Pentax SVi

CCD 5.0MP effective
LENS 36-180mm (equiv) f/2.8 – 4.7
SHUTTER SPEED 4-1/2000 sec
ISO A, 50, 100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M, 12 Scene, Mov
FLASH 0.12-4.2m (W), 0.6-2.5m (T)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/1.8in
OTHER SD, nine filters
POWER Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 91.5 x 56 x 28mm/165g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Feature set, Pentax lens
CONS Plastic tripod bush, fiddly mode dial
SUMMARY ***Good-looking camera with decent lens and feature set***

WDC SCORE **84%** TESTED Oct 2005

£200 Estimated Street Price (£260 RRP) — Kodak Z740

CCD 5.36MP CCD, 5.0MP effective
LENS 38-380mm f2.8-3.7
SHUTTER SPEED 8-1/1000sec
ISO Auto plus ISO 80,100, 200, 400, 800
EXPOSURE MODES P,A,S,M, 16 Scene, Mov
FLASH Built in GN 10.6
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Electronic/1.8in
OTHER SD/MMC, 35Mb internal storage, USB and 640 x 480 movie
POWER 2x AA, 1x CR-V3 or EasyShare dock with Ni-MH battery pack
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 97.6 x 77.5 x 72mm/287g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS 10x optical zoom, comfortable to hold
CONS Fringing, no manual white balance, fiddly joystick

WDC SCORE 82%

SUMMARY ***Easy to use with plenty of features, some image quality issues***

TESTED May 2005

£200 Estimated Street Price (£280RRP) — Nikon S1

CCD 5.36MP total, 5.0MP effective
LENS 35-105mm f/3.0 – f/5.4
SHUTTER SPEED 1 – 1/350 sec
ISO Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES Program, 13 scene, 4 scene assist
FLASH Built in
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR No viewfinder / 2.5in
OTHER SD, 12MB internal
POWER Nikon EN-EL8
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 89.9 x 57.5 x 19.mm/118g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Large LCD screen, easy to operate, D-lighting
CONS Often tricky macro focusing, eats battery power

WDC SCORE 84%

SUMMARY ***Stylish and easy to use with limited features***

TESTED July 2005

£200 Estimated Street Price (£279 RRP) — Casio EX-Z57

CCD 5MP eff
LENS 35-105mm, f2.6-4.8
SHUTTER SPEED 4sec-1/2000sec
ISO Auto, 50,100,200,400
EXPOSURE MODES P, BestShot modes
FLASH Built in 0.2-2.6m
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/2.7inch
OTHER MS, MS Pro
POWER Superlife Rechargeable Li-Ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 87 x 58 x 22.5mm/130g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Compact size, BestShot modes, battery life
CONS No AV connection, lack of space around back

WDC SCORE 83%

SUMMARY ***Not the easiest to operate, but a decent camera with satisfactory results***

TESTED Aug 2005

£200 Estimated Street Price (£300 RRP) — Samsung V700

CCD 7.1MP eff
LENS 38-114mm equiv
SHUTTER SPEED 15sec-1/2000sec
ISO Auto, 50,100,200,400
EXPOSURE MODES P,A,S,M, Sc,Mov, ±2EV
FLASH Built in
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Yes/1.8inch
OTHER SD, Composite mode, PictBridge, Histogram USB2
POWER Li-Ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 56.5x105x29.5mm/150g

7 Mega Pixels

PROS Good noise control, plenty of features
CONS Difficult to use features effectively, artefacts

WDC SCORE 80%

SUMMARY ***Packed with features, tricky to operate and images are over processed***

TESTED May 2005

£220 Estimated Street Price (£400 RRP) — Olympus C-770

CCD 4MP
LENS 38-380mm
SHUTTER SPEED 15-1/1000sec
ISO Auto, 64,100,200,400
EXPOSURE MODES P,A,S,M,Sc(9), Mov, ±2EV
FLASH Auto, redeye reduction, forced, suppressed, slow sync
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR EVF/1.8in LCD
OTHER xD, MPEG4 Panorama assist, flash compensation
POWER Li-Ion, AC Adaptor included
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 104.5 x 60 x 68.5mm/300g

4 Mega Pixels

PROS Compact, well made, MPEG4, good LCD
CONS Heavy, similar to other models in the range

WDC SCORE 85%

SUMMARY ***At the moment the C770 stands alone in its niche and stands proud***

TESTED Sep 2004

£220 Estimated Street Price (£299RRP) — Sony P200

CCD 7.2MP effective
LENS 38-114mm f/2.8 – f/5.2
SHUTTER SPEED 30 – 1/1000th sec
ISO Auto, 100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES Program & 9 scene modes
FLASH Built in
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical / 2.0-inch TFT
OTHER MS, MS Pro
POWER InfoLITHIUM NP-FR1
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 104 x 51.5 x 27.9mm/180g

7 Mega Pixels

PROS Fast, good-quality images, build
CONS LCD visibility in bright sunlight

WDC SCORE 84%

SUMMARY ***Impressively specified in a small body, but images are noisy***

TESTED July 2005

£220 Estimated Street Price (£299 RRP) — Fujifilm Z1

CCD 5.1MP effective
LENS 36-108mm f/3.5-8.3
SHUTTER SPEED 4-1/1000sec
ISO Auto, 64-800
EXPOSURE MODES P + 5 Scene
FLASH Built-in
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/ 2.5in LCD
OTHER 640x480 15fps Video, xD
POWER Lithium ion cell
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 90 x 55 x 18.6mm/130g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Design, ease of use, build quality
CONS Limited overrides, some lens distortion

WDC SCORE 85%

SUMMARY ***Attractive, pretty fast and capable of decent pictures***

TESTED Oct 2005

£230 Estimated Street Price (£319 RRP) — Canon IXUS 50

CCD 5MP eff
LENS 35-105mm f2.8-4.9
SHUTTER SPEED 15 – 1/500 sec
ISO Auto, 50,100,200,400
EXPOSURE MODES A, M, 6 scene modes
FLASH 0.5m –3.5m (W) / 2.0 (T)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical/ 2.0-inch
OTHER SD
POWER Li-Ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 86 x 53 x 20.7mm/130g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Sturdy build, quick operation
CONS Limited manual features, camera shake possible

WDC SCORE 85%

SUMMARY ***Lacks advanced features, but generally pleasing results and decent build***

TESTED Oct 2005

£230 Estimated Street Price (£240 RRP) — Panasonic LZ2

CCD 5.36MP total, 5MP effective
LENS 37-222mm f/2.8-4.5
SHUTTER SPEED 8-1/2000sec
ISO 64-400
EXPOSURE MODES Program, Sc, Mov
FLASH Built in
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR 2in LCD
OTHER SD, Image Stabilisation
POWER 2x AA
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 101 x 64 x 33mm/224g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Lens, price, image stabilisation
CONS Some image noise, bulkier than most compacts

WDC SCORE 88%

SUMMARY ***Fantastic lens and good colour at very reasonable price***

TESTED July 2005

£230 Estimated Street Price (£329 RRP) — Sony W7

CCD 7.4MP total, 7.0MP effective
LENS 38-114mm f2.8-5.2
SHUTTER SPEED 15-1/2000sec
ISO Auto, 100-400
EXPOSURE MODES Auto, M, 6 scene modes
FLASH Built-in
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Opt/2.5inch
OTHER MS, slot, 32Mb internal
POWER 2x AA
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 91 x 60 x 37.1mm/ 253g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Great performer all round
CONS High-resolution images

WDC SCORE 86%

SUMMARY ***Good specs and handling, great images, use a tripod in low light levels***

TESTED July 2005

£230 Estimated Street Price (£300 RRP) — Fujifilm Finepix F10

CCD 6.63 Total 6.3MP effective
LENS 36-108mm f/2.8-5
SHUTTER SPEED 3-1/2000sec
ISO 80-1600
EXPOSURE MODES Program, Scene, Mov
FLASH Built-in 4m(W)-6.5m(T)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/2.5in LCD
OTHER xD storage
POWER Li-Ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 92 x 58 x 27.3mm/200g

6 Mega Pixels

PROS Big LCD, handling, low-light performance
CONS Little manual control, no RAW

WDC SCORE 87%

SUMMARY ***Stylish, responsive, producing excellent images. Good ISO performance***

TESTED June 2005

£240 Estimated Street Price (£400 RRP) — Sony T3

CCD 5.1MP effective
LENS 38-114mm f/3.5-4.4
SHUTTER SPEED 1-1/1000sec
ISO Auto plus ISO 100, 200 and 400
EXPOSURE MODES Auto, program, Sc (8)
FLASH Built-in GN 7.5m
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR 2.5in LCD
OTHER MS Duo
POWER LiIon 3.6V 680mAh rechargeable
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 91x60x18mm/171g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Design, good user control, good macro, LCD
CONS Exposure modes rather limiting

WDC SCORE 86%

SUMMARY ***Combines good looks with excellent performance***

TESTED Feb 2005

£240 Estimated Street Price (£320 RRP) — Nikon S2

CCD 5.1MP effective
LENS 35-105mm equivalent) f/3-5.4
SHUTTER SPEED 8-1/2000sec
ISO 50-400
EXPOSURE MODES Auto, 15 Sc, Mov
FLASH 0.3-2.5m (Wide/ISO Auto), 0.3-1.4m(Tele/ISO Auto)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/ 2.5in
OTHER SD, all weather, USB camera dock
POWER Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 91.9 x 59 x 22mm/140g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Good front design, good scene modes, all-weather
CONS Cramped back, corner sharpness, lens distortion

WDC SCORE 80%

SUMMARY ***Looks great, but let down by image quality and handling issues***

TESTED Sept 2005

£240 Estimated Street Price (£300 RRP) — Panasonic FX8

CCD 5MP
LENS 35-105mm f/2.8-5.6
SHUTTER SPEED 8-1/2000sec
ISO 80-400
EXPOSURE MODES Program AE, 12 Sc, Mov
FLASH 0.3-4.0m (Wide/ISO Auto), 0.3-2.2m (Tele/ISO Auto)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/2.5in LCD
OTHER SD, Image Stabilisation (OIS), continuous shooting
POWER Li-Ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 94.1 x 50.5 x 24.2mm/155g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Mega OIS, LCD, video, simplicity
CONS Cramped thumb space, average image quality

WDC SCORE 85%

SUMMARY ***Competent lifestyle camera with great movie mode and stabilisation***

TESTED Sept 2005

£250 Estimated Street Price (£300 RRP) — Ricoh Caplio GX8

CCD 8.5MP Total, 8.2MP effective
LENS 28-85mm (equivalent) f/2.5-4.34
SHUTTER SPEED 30-1/2000sec
ISO 60-1600
EXPOSURE MODES Auto, A, M, six Scene
FLASH Built-in
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR OPT/1.8in
OTHER SD slot
POWER 2xAA
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 113.6 x 58 x 29mm/205g

8 Mega Pixels

PROS Lens, build, features
CONS Power consumption, LCD colour cast

WDC SCORE 81%

SUMMARY ***Good lens, features and build. But it is power hungry and the LCD is poor***

TESTED Aug 2005

THE BUYERS' GUIDE

cameras £300 - £400

£250 Estimated Street Price (£320 RRP) — Nikon Coolpix 7900

CCD 7.41MP CCD, 7.1MP effective
LENS 38-114mm f2.8-4.9
SHUTTER SPEED 4-1/2000sec
ISO A, 50, 100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES Program, scene modes, ±2 EV
FLASH Built in
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical / 2in
OTHER SD, JPEG, 3 metering modes, D-Light, red-eye removal
POWER Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 88 x 60 x 36.5mm/150g

7 Mega Pixels

PROS Small, high resolution, good image noise control
CONS Image detail and sharpening, AF
SUMMARY **Contains innovative features, but produces overprocessed images**

WDC SCORE 83%
TESTED June 2005

£250 Estimated Street Price (£480 RRP) — Fujifilm F810

CCD 6.3MP effective, 12.3MP output
LENS 35.5-142mm (equiv) f/2.8-5.6
SHUTTER SPEED 3-1/2000sec
ISO Automatic, ISO 80, 100, 200, 400, 800
EXPOSURE MODES P,A, S, M, four Scene
FLASH GN 11m
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical /2.1inch
OTHER xD card, widescreen 16:9 format images, RAW mode
POWER Lilon rechargeable cell
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 109.5x54x29mm/200g

6 Mega Pixels

PROS Good 6MP image quality, lovely build quality
CONS 12MP output, highlights blowing out
SUMMARY **Use at the 6MP setting for the best results and you won't be disappointed**

WDC SCORE 85%
TESTED Dec 2004

£250 Estimated Street Price (£330 RRP) — Casio EX-Z750

CCD 7.4MP total, 7.2MP effective
LENS 38-114mm f2.8-5.1
SHUTTER SPEED 60-1/6000sec
ISO 50-400
EXPOSURE MODES Snapshot, M, A, S, 30 scene
FLASH Built-in GN8
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR OPT/2.5in
OTHER SD
POWER Li-Ion cell
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 89 x 58.5 x 22.5mm/ 127g

7 Mega Pixels

PROS Movie modes, scene modes
CONS LCD, Colour accuracy, images no better than 5MP
SUMMARY **Good movie and scene modes, extra pixels contribute little**

WDC SCORE 82%
TESTED July 2005

£250 Estimated Street Price (£250 RRP) — Kodak V530

CCD 5.36MP total, 5MP effective
LENS 36-108mm f2.8-4.8
SHUTTER SPEED 8-1/448sec
ISO A, 80, 100, 200, 400, 800 (1.8MP)
EXPOSURE MODES Auto, 20 scene
FLASH 0.6-2.8m (W) /1.9m (T)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None / 2in LCD, 230,000 pixels
OTHER SD, 5 colour modes, 16MB internal memory
POWER Li-ion cell
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 92 x 50 x 22mm/ 130g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Plentiful scene modes
CONS Slow optical zoom, LCD in bright light
SUMMARY **Decent easy to use entry-level compact with good scene modes**

WDC SCORE 83%
TESTED Nov 2005

£255 Estimated Street Price (£349 RRP) — Sony T7

CCD 5.1MP effective
LENS 38-114mm f3.5-4.4
SHUTTER SPEED 1/8-1/1000sec
ISO 64-400
EXPOSURE MODES Auto, Scene modes, Mov
FLASH Built in 0.1-2.6, Tele: 0.5-2.1
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Opt/2.5-inch
OTHER Memory Stick Duo, MPEG 1, Pict Bridge, USB 2.0
POWER Info Lithium
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 91.7 x 60.2 x 14.7mm/114g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Good image quality, good looks
CONS Poor documentation, small and fiddly
SUMMARY **Competent performer, but fiddly to operate and needs a decent manual**

WDC SCORE 80%
TESTED Aug 2005

£260 Estimated Street Price (£299RRP) — KonicaMinolta Dimage X1

CCD Total 8.3MP, Effective 8.0MP
LENS 37-111mm f/3.5-3.8
SHUTTER SPEED 1-1/1250sec
ISO Auto, 50 -200 (Auto 50-160)
EXPOSURE MODES P, 7 Scene modes
FLASH Auto plus 5
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/ 2.5in LCD, 115,000 pixels
OTHER 640x480 pixels 30fps, SD
POWER Lithium ion cell
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 95 x 68 x 19.5mm/135g

8 Mega Pixels

PROS Anti-shake, image size, LCD size
CONS Slow in review mode
SUMMARY **High resolution, and easy to use with a bundle of features**

WDC SCORE 86%
TESTED Nov 2005

£260 Estimated Street Price (£299RRP) — Olympus mju800

CCD Total 8.3MP, Effective 8.0MP
LENS 38-114mm f/2.8-4.9
SHUTTER SPEED 4-1/2000sec
ISO Auto, 64-1600
EXPOSURE MODES P,A,S +19 scene
FLASH Built-in, Auto plus 3 modes
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/ 2.5in LCD
OTHER 640x480 15fps Video, xD card and 19MB int
POWER Lithium ion cell
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 103 x 58 x 33mm/181.5g

8 Mega Pixels

PROS Image quality, LCD screen, build quality
CONS Left-hand backplate button visibility in bright sun
SUMMARY **Good looking camera, producing high-quality images**

WDC SCORE 86%
TESTED Oct 2005

£260 Estimated Street Price (£350 RRP) — Konica Minolta Z5

CCD 5.2MP total, 5MP effective
LENS 35-420mm f2.8-4.5
SHUTTER SPEED 4-1/1000sec
ISO Auto, 50,100,200,320
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, M, S, 5 scene
FLASH Built in GN 8
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Electronic viewfinder/2.0inch LCD
OTHER SD, MMC, USB 2.0, 640 x 480 movie
POWER 4x AA cells
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 108.5 x 80 x 84mm/ 340g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS LCD size, 12x opt zoom, anti-shake
CONS Noise at higher ISOs, LCD in bright sunlight
SUMMARY **Sophisticated camera, chunkier than most, with a usefully wide lens**

WDC SCORE 85%
TESTED July 2005

£270 Estimated Street Price (£339 RRP) — Casio Exilim Pro EX-P505

CCD 5.25MP CCD, 5.0 MP effective
LENS 38-190mm f3.3-3.6
SHUTTER SPEED 60 – 1/2000sec
ISO A, 50, 100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, Auto, 22 Scene modes
FLASH Built-in
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR No viewfinder /2in flip and twist LCD
OTHER SD, MMC, 7.5Mb internal memory
POWER SUPERLIFE lithium-ion cell
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 98.5 x 55.5 x 73.5mm/ 215g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Fast focus & start-up, compact size, 5x zoom
CONS Cramped controls, poor build, excessive noise
SUMMARY **Great on paper, but the build and high incidence of noise disappoint**

WDC SCORE 80%
TESTED June 2005

£275 Estimated Street Price (£350 RRP) — Panasonic FZ5

CCD 5.0MP effective
LENS 36-432mm f/2.8-3.3
SHUTTER SPEED 8-1/1000sec
ISO Auto plus ISO 80,100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES P,SA,S,M, nine Scene & macro, Mov
FLASH Built-in flash, GN12.6m
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR EVF, 1.8in
OTHER SD/MMC, movie with sound at 320x240 pixels, 30 10 15fps
POWER 8.4V 680mAh Lithium Ion rechargeable cell
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 108x68.4x84.8mm /290g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Great zoom range, excellent lens
CONS Noise in low light
SUMMARY **One of the best megazoom cameras around, producing good results**

WDC SCORE 85%
TESTED May 2005

£280 Estimated Street Price (£450 RRP) — Canon S70

CCD 7.4MP total (7.1MP effective)
LENS 28-100mm f/2.8-5.3
SHUTTER SPEED 15-1/2000sec
ISO Auto plus ISO 50,100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M, 6 scene modes, Mov
FLASH Built-in flash, GN 11.8m
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical, 1.8in LCD
OTHER CF I or II, Movie recording, Pictbridge
POWER 7.4V 750mAh Lithium Ion rechargeable cell
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 114 x 56.5 x 38.8mm/230g

7 Mega Pixels

PROS True wideangle lens, close focusing quality
CONS Exposures can be a little dark
SUMMARY **Some minor niggles, but this fully-featured camera is impressive**

WDC SCORE 86%
TESTED May 2005

£300 Estimated Street Price (£400 RRP) — Sony H1

CCD 5.1 MP effective
LENS 36-432mm f2.8-3.7
SHUTTER SPEED 30-1/2000sec
ISO Auto, 64, 100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES Auto, P, A, S, M, 7 scene modes
FLASH 0.3m – 6.8m (W) 0.9 - 5.2m (T)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Electronic/ 2.5-inch
OTHER 640 x 480 movie, 2cm macro, MS, MSPro, 32Mb internal
POWER 2x AA cells
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 108 x 81.4 x 91.2mm/ 590.8g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS 12x optical zoom, feature set, build quality
CONS Lacks some pro features such as RAW
SUMMARY **Zoom and features ensure there is plenty for the enthusiast**

WDC SCORE 85%
TESTED Sept 2005

£300 Estimated Street Price (£400RRP) — Canon IXUS 700

CCD 7.1MP effective
LENS 37-114mm f/2.8-4.9
SHUTTER SPEED 15-1/2000sec
ISO Auto plus ISO 80,100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES Auto, Prog, scene, movie
FLASH 50cm-5m(W)/ 3m (T) at ISO Auto
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Opt/2.0-inch
OTHER SD, histogram, PictBridge
POWER Lithium Ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 89.5 x 57 x 26.5mm /170g

7 Mega Pixels

PROS Design, good image quality, quick
CONS Manual controls are limited
SUMMARY **One of the better 7MP models; excellent images with easy operation**

WDC SCORE 87%
TESTED July 2005

£300 Estimated Street Price (£500 RRP) — Casio P700

CCD 7.1MP eff
LENS 33-132mm
SHUTTER SPEED 60-1/200 & B
ISO Auto, 80-640
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M, BestShot, Mov
FLASH GN 3.6m W 2.5mT
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical/2in TFT
OTHER SD, 9MB internal, calendar, album, world clock, alarm
POWER Li-Ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 98 x 68 x 45mm/225g

7 Mega Pixels

PROS Features, handling, design
CONS Vignetting, SD compatibility, slight noise problems
SUMMARY **A fun camera, bursting with feeatures, that delivers the goods**

WDC SCORE 88%
TESTED Jan 2005

£300 Estimated Street Price (£350 RRP) — KonicaMinolta Dimage Z6

CCD 6MP eff/6.4MP total
LENS 35-420mm f/2.8-4.5
SHUTTER SPEED 4-1/1000 sec
ISO Auto, 50, 100, 200, 320
EXPOSURE MODES A, AP, M, SP, Auto, 5 scene
FLASH ISO 100 equ 8m/26.2 ft
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Electronic/2in TFT, 114,000 pixels
OTHER 320x240movie, 4 colour modes, 1cm super macro, SD
POWER 4x AA cells
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 108.5 x 80 x 84mm/340g

6 Mega Pixels

PROS Fast operation, lens
CONS Some components weak, LCD in bright light
SUMMARY **Packed with features, producing good results. Recommended**

WDC SCORE 85%
TESTED Nov 2005

£310 Estimated Street Price (£700 RRP) — Fujifilm S7000

CCD 6.3MP (12MP Output)
LENS 35–210mm
SHUTTER SPEED 15-1/2000sec
ISO 160,200,400,800
EXPOSURE MODES P, SP, AP, M, auto, Sc, Mov
FLASH GN 3m@auto/wide
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR EVF/1.8in
OTHER Cable release socket, A/V out, xD,CF
POWER Rechargeable AA NiMH inc
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 121x97x82mm/590g

6 Mega Pixels

PROS High resolution, build quality, RAW files
CONS Macro button position, no PC socket

WDC SCORE 88%

SUMMARY **The additional resolution is a great boon. Great handling and control**

TESTED Awards 03

£310 Estimated Street Price (£399 RRP) — Olympus C-70

CCD 7.1MP
LENS 38-190mm equiv, (5x zoom) F2.8-4.8
SHUTTER SPEED 15-1/2000se
ISO 80, 100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M, 5 scene modes
FLASH 3.8m(W)-2.2m(T)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical/2.0" LCD
OTHER PictBridge, USB 1.1, xD-Picture cards
POWER LI-12B 3.7V Lithium rechargeable battery
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 102 x 59 x 42.4mm/220g

7 Mega Pixels

PROS Build quality, design, image quality
CONS Lousy zoom control, over-complicated menu

WDC SCORE 89%

SUMMARY **A well-built camera with some great features but has flaws**

TESTED Apr 2005

£330 Estimated Street Price (£469 RRP) — Canon S2 IS

CCD 5.0MP effective
LENS 38-432mm f/2.8-3.1
SHUTTER SPEED 15-1/3200sec
ISO 50-400
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M, auto, plus 6 scene modes
FLASH Built-in pop-up
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR EVF / 1.8inch
OTHER SD, Flexizone focus, Image Stabilisation
POWER 4xAA
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 113 x 78 x 75.5mm/405g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Good AF, Image stabiliser ideal for 12x zoom
CONS Bit bulky, bit pricey, only saves to JPEG

WDC SCORE 81%

SUMMARY **Fast, good metering, focusing and stabilisation. Often unusual fringing**

TESTED Aug 2005

£350 Estimated Street Price (£499 RRP) — Olympus Camedia C-7070

CCD 7.4MP Total 7.1MP effective
LENS 27-110mm equivalent) f/2.4-4.8
SHUTTER SPEED 15-1/4000sec
ISO Auto, plus 50-400
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M + 7 Scene
FLASH Built in/Hotshoe
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical/ 1.8in LCD
OTHER xD and CF slots
POWER Li-Ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 116 x 87 x 65.5mm/433g

7 Mega Pixels

PROS Image quality
CONS Function finding

WDC SCORE 86%

SUMMARY **Very capable, good image quality and lens performance**

TESTED June 2005

£350 Estimated Street Price (£650 RRP) — Panasonic FZ20

CCD 5MP effective
LENS 36-432mm
SHUTTER SPEED 8-1/2000sec
ISO 80-400
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M, Sc, ±2EV
FLASH Built in/Hotshoe
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR EVF / 2.0" LCD
OTHER SD, Mega OIS, live histogram, 3fps over seven frames
POWER Li-Ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 127.6x87.2x106.2mm/520g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Image quality, lens, handling
CONS No RAW format, fiddly aperture/shutter controls

WDC SCORE 89%

SUMMARY **Panasonic is proud of its new baby and you'll be a proud owner too**

TESTED Dec 2004

£370 Estimated Street Price (£499 RRP) — Sanyo C5

CCD 5.3MP Total 5.1MP effective
LENS 38-190mm f/3.5-4.7
SHUTTER SPEED 4-1/2000sec
ISO Auto (50-200) plus ISO 400 and 800
EXPOSURE MODES Auto + 6 Scene
FLASH Built-in GN 8
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR 2in Vari-Angle LCD
OTHER 1Gb SD included, video image stabilising
POWER Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 68 x 108 x 23mm/145g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Excellent bright light performance
CONS Suspect low-light focusing and noise

WDC SCORE 80%

SUMMARY **Good picture quality in bright sunlight, but struggles in low light**

TESTED Aug 2005

£370 Estimated Street Price (£549 RRP) — Konica Minolta A200

CCD 8.0MP effective
LENS 28-200mm f/2.8 – f/3.5
SHUTTER SPEED 15 – 1/32000 sec
ISO Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400, 800
EXPOSURE MODES Auto, P,A,S,M,4 Sc
FLASH Built in/Hotshoe)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR EVF/1.8-inch Vari-Angle LCD
OTHER CF Type I/II, 10fps, 40-frame buffer at 640x480
POWER NP-800 Li-ion battery pack
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 114x80x115mm/505g

8 Mega Pixels

PROS Excellent optics & metering, images, handling
CONS AF foibles, sensitive shutter release

WDC SCORE 88%

SUMMARY **A lot of camera for the price, and easier to use than the A2**

TESTED Apr 2005

£370 Estimated Street Price (£499 RRP) — Sony V3

CCD 7.1MP effective
LENS 34-136mm f/2.8-4
SHUTTER SPEED 30-1/2000sec & B
ISO 100-800
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M,
FLASH Built-in pop-up, Hotshoe
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical/2.5in
OTHER Memorystick Pro; CF type I; 300-point metering
POWER InfoLithium
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 120 x 63 x 72mm/390g

7 Mega Pixels

PROS Quality build, handling
CONS A bit large for some, perhaps

WDC SCORE 87%

SUMMARY **Highly specified and capable camera that should last years**

TESTED Apr 2005

£370 Estimated Street Price (£450 RRP) — Panasonic LX1

CCD 8.61MP total, 8.4MP effective
LENS 28-112mm f/2.8-4.9
SHUTTER SPEED 60-1/2000sec
ISO Auto, 80-400
EXPOSURE MODES M, A, S, P, plus 14 Scene
FLASH Auto, plus 6
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/2.5in TFT, 207,000 pixels
OTHER 848x480 30fps movie, SD, Jpeg, RAW, TIFF
POWER Lithium-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 106 x 56 x 25.5mm/185g

8 Mega Pixels

PROS Fully featured, unique CCD format
CONS Noise can be an issue over ISO 100, expensive

WDC SCORE 85%

SUMMARY **Full specifications with simple handling, nice design and good build**

TESTED Nov 2005

£380 Estimated Street Price (£900 RRP) — Canon G6

CCD 7.1MP effective
LENS 35-140mm Max f2.0- f3.0
SHUTTER SPEED 15 – 1/2,000 sec
ISO AUTO, 50, 100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES Auto, P,A,S,M,Sc,Mov,
FLASH 70cm-5.0m (W) / 4.0m (T) (at ISO 100 equiv)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Opt/ 2.0in
OTHER CF I/II, +/- 2 EV
POWER Rechargeable Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 104.9 x 72.8 x 73.1 mm / 380g

7 Mega Pixels

PROS Image quality, build, handling
CONS Monitor too dark, power switch

WDC SCORE 89%

SUMMARY **A serious camera to consider as an alternative to a DSLR**

TESTED Dec 2004

£400 Estimated Street Price (£1000 RRP) — Pentax 750Z

CCD 7.1MP eff
LENS 37.5-187.5mm
SHUTTER SPEED 15-1/1000th
ISO 80-400
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M, 12 picture modes
FLASH Range 0.2m-3.5m
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical/1.8in
OTHER SD/MMC, PictBridge
POWER Rechargeable Li-Ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 100 x 61.5 x 42mm, 210g

7 Mega Pixels

PROS Handling, features, image quality, battery life
CONS Slow start-up and write time, no RAW

WDC SCORE 89%

SUMMARY **One of the best of the new breed, producing great photos**

TESTED Special 04

£430 Estimated Street Price (£499 RRP) — Sanyo C4

CCD 4.23/4.0 MP
LENS 38-220mm f/3.5 – 3.7
SHUTTER SPEED 4 (lamp mode)-1/2000sec
ISO A, 50, 100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES P, 6 scene modes
FLASH Built-in
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/1.8-inch
OTHER 128Mb and 1Gb SD cards supplied, two filters
POWER Li-ion DB-L20
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 69 x 108 x 34mm/159g

4 Mega Pixels

PROS Video and still image capability
CONS Awkward handling

WDC SCORE 80%

SUMMARY **A useful option for those who want both still and movie capabilities**

TESTED Sept 2005

£440 Estimated Street Price (£1000 RRP) — Canon Pro 1

CCD 8.0MP effective
LENS 28-200mm USM L
SHUTTER SPEED 1/5-1/4000sec
ISO 50-400
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M, Sc, Mov
FLASH Popup & TTL hotshoe, GN 5m @ ISO100Wide
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR EVF / 2.0in
OTHER Wireless remote, CF, 2.5fps, RAW, PictBridge
POWER Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 117.5x72x90.3mm/545g

8 Mega Pixels

PROS Generally good image and lens quality
CONS Zoom control, no live histogram

WDC SCORE 83%

SUMMARY **Uninspiring design aside, the Pro 1 can achieve good results**

TESTED June 2004

£450 Estimated Street Price (£500 RRP) — Sony CD500

CCD 5.24MP
LENS 34–102mm
SHUTTER SPEED 8-1/1000sec
ISO 100,200,400
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M, Sc, Mov
FLASH GN 5m@auto/wide
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical/2.5in
OTHER 52mm filter thread, USB 2.0 transfer,CD
POWER Sony Info Lithium and charger inc
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 139x103x96mm/606g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Cheap storage, fully featured, fast shutter
CONS Minor image quality concerns, slow playback

WDC SCORE 82%

SUMMARY **A joy to use. Cost of memory is a bonus. Everything most will need**

TESTED Oct 2003

£450 Estimated Street Price (£550 RRP) — Panasonic DMCFZ30

CCD 8MP effective, 8.3MP total
LENS 35–420mm, f/2.8-3.7
SHUTTER SPEED 60-1/2000sec
ISO 80-400
EXPOSURE MODES Auto, P, A, S, M, plus 14 Sc
FLASH GN 7 (auto) hotshoe
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR EVF/2in LCD 230,000 pixels
OTHER SD, PictBridge, USB 2.0, Mega OIS, RAW
POWER Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 141 x 86 x 138mm/740g

8 Mega Pixels

PROS Features, handling, EVF, good images possible
CONS Noise at high ISO, camera shake, RAW conversion

WDC SCORE 85%

SUMMARY **Good features and spec, however it suffers from noise at ISO 200**

TESTED Nov 2005

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£450 Estimated Street Price (£550 RRP) — Nikon D50

CCD 6.24MP/6.1MP effective
LENS Interchangeable
SHUTTER SPEED 30-1/4000sec, bulb
ISO 200-1600
EXPOSURE MODES Auto,P, A, S, M, Sc
FLASH GN 15m (ISO200), hotshoe
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Opt/2in LCD
OTHER SD, 3 Colour space, Pict Bridge, USB 2.0
POWER Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 133 x 102 x 76mm/540g

6 Mega Pixels

PROS Simple, image quality, design & build, price
CONS Lacks some features like PC socket
SUMMARY **Controls are stripped back, but it is easy to use and fast at a good price**

WDC SCORE **87%** TESTED Aug 2005

£450 Estimated Street Price (£900 RRP) — Nikon 8700

CCD 8MP (eff)
LENS 35-280mm
SHUTTER SPEED 1/8-1/4000 sec & B
ISO Selectable to 50,100,200,400
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M, Sc, Mov
FLASH GN 4m @ Auto/wide
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR EVF/ 1.8in
OTHER RAW, TIFF, JPEG, sound, custom functions
POWER Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 105 x 113 x 78mm/512g

8 Mega Pixels

PROS Good image quality at low ISO, lots of features
CONS Noise at ISO 400, handling, fringing
SUMMARY **The 8700 makes good use of the 8MP CCD but handling is poor**

WDC SCORE **78%** TESTED May 2004

£460 Estimated Street Price (£650 RRP) — Nikon 8400

CCD 8MP effective
LENS 24-85mm
SHUTTER SPEED 8-1/3000sec
ISO 50-400
EXPOSURE MODES P,A,S,M, Sc, ±2EV, Mov
FLASH Built-in/hotshoe
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR EVF /1.8in LCD
OTHER CF, swivel LCD, 2.3fps over five frames, RAW, TIFF, JPEG
POWER Li-Ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 113.6 x 82.5 x 75mm/400g

8 Mega Pixels

PROS 24mm lens, functional, build quality
CONS Some fringing & noise, overly complicated menus
SUMMARY **A marked improvement on some recent Nikon cameras, very nice**

WDC SCORE **89%** TESTED Jan 2005

£460 Estimated Street Price (£550 RRP) — Pentax *iST DL

CCD 6.31MP, 6.1MP effective
LENS Interchangeable
SHUTTER SPEED 30-1/4000sec, bulb
ISO 200-3200
EXPOSURE MODES P,A,S,M, Auto, 7 PICT modes
FLASH Pop-up and TTL hotshoe
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR TTL Optical via Penta Mirror/2.5in
OTHER SD storage, RAW, JPEG
POWER Four AA or 2 CRV-3
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 125 x 92.5 x 67mm/470g

6 Mega Pixels

PROS Simple to use, great results
CONS RAW processing software is limited
SUMMARY **Impressive results, positive handling and good build quality**

WDC SCORE **89%** TESTED Sept 2005

£510 Estimated Street Price (£700 RRP) — Nikon 8800

CCD 8.3MP Total/8.0 MP Effective
LENS 35-350mm f/2.8-f/5 (10x zoom)
SHUTTER SPEED 8– 1/3000 sec & B
ISO Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES Auto; P, A, S, M, Sc, Mov, ±2EV, Custom
FLASH Built in/Hotshoe
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR EVF, 1.8in Vari-Angle LCD
OTHER CF Type I/II, 2.3fps, PictBridge
POWER Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 116 x 85 x 121 mm/680g

8 Mega Pixels

PROS Lens, compact, handling
CONS Image noise, limited sensitivity
SUMMARY **Eminently usable and worthy model with good results**

WDC SCORE **86%** TESTED Apr 2005

£530 Estimated Street Price (£749 RRP) — Canon 350D

CMOS 8.3MP, 8MP effective
LENS Canon EF/EF-S mount
SHUTTER SPEED 30-1/4000sec & Bulb
ISO 100-1600
EXPOSURE MODES PASM, A-DEP, Auto, 5 Scene
FLASH Hotshoe, GN 13m (ISO 100)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical, 1.8" 115,000 pixel LCD
OTHER CF I/II, 9 custom functions, USB 2.0, RAW +JPEG
POWER Rechargable Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 126.5 x 94.2 x 64mm/485g

8 Mega Pixels

PROS Features, fast, performance, image quality
CONS LCD , some button placements
SUMMARY **Well designed, fast and produces great results, good for semi-pros**

WDC SCORE **90%** TESTED May 2005

£530 Estimated Street Price (£600 RRP) — KonicaMinolta Dynax 5D

CCD 6.3MP, 6.1MP effective
LENS Minolta A mount
SHUTTER SPEED 30-1/4000sec & Bulb
ISO 100-3200
EXPOSURE MODES Auto, P, A, S, M, Sc
FLASH GN 15m (ISO200), hotshoe
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical, 2.5in LCD
OTHER CF 1/II, 3 Colour space, Pictbridge, USB2, AntiShake CCD
POWER Rechargeable Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 130.5 x 92.5 x 66.5mm/590g

6 Mega Pixels

PROS Anti-shake, white balance, ISO range, size
CONS Issues with high-contrast scenes in scene modes
SUMMARY **A technically advanced but surprisingly simple well-designed camera**

WDC SCORE **89%** TESTED Oct 2005

£540 Estimated Street Price (£700 RRP) — Olympus E-300

CMOS 8.8MP, 8MP effective
LENS 4/3 Mount Interchangeable
SHUTTER SPEED 30-1/4000sec & Bulb
ISO 100-400 (plus 800 and 1600)
EXPOSURE MODES P,A,S,M +5 dial scene and 14 Scene
FLASH Pop-up and dedicated hotshoe
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR OPT/ 1.8in
OTHER CF types I & II, RAW mode, PictBridge compatible
POWER 1500mAh Lilon cell
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 146.5 x 85 x 64mm/580g

8 Mega Pixels

PROS 8MP, exposure accuracy, battery life
CONS Bulky, slow write times, some artefacting
SUMMARY **Design of the 4/3 format SLR may not suit all tastes, but 8MP might**

WDC SCORE **87%** TESTED Mar 2005

£560 Estimated Street Price (£900 RRP) — Sony F828

CCD 8MP
LENS 28-200mm f2-2.8
SHUTTER SPEED 30-1/3200
ISO 64,100, 200,400,800
EXPOSURE MODES Auto, P, A, S, M, Sc, Mov
FLASH GN not stated
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR EVF, 1.8in
OTHER Audio recording, EXIF, Pictbridge, 58mm filter thread
POWER Info Lithium battery pack
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 156 x 134 x 91mm

8 Mega Pixels

PROS Great specification, lovely design, nice lens
CONS Purple finging, noise, electronic viewfinder
SUMMARY **Lovely, but let down by fringing. With Sony firmware update, could be great**

WDC SCORE **79%** TESTED Mar 2004

£580 Estimated Street Price (£800 RRP) — Nikon D70

CMOS 6.1MP (eff)
LENS Nikon F
SHUTTER SPEED 30-1/8000sec &Bulb
ISO 200-1600
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, M, SC, +/-2EV
FLASH Pop-up, i-TTL and hotshoe
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR OPT/ 1.8in
OTHER NEF, JPEG, TIFF, PictBridge
POWER Rechargeable Li-Ion or 3CR2
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 140x111x78mm/ 595g

6 Mega Pixels

PROS Good price, design and quality
CONS No PC socket, images need some work
SUMMARY **In many ways a dream camera, not least because of the price**

WDC SCORE **92%** TESTED May 2004

£580 Estimated Street Price (£700 RRP) — Nikon D70 S

CMOS 6.24MP total, 6.1MP effective
LENS Nikon F mount/1.5x mag
SHUTTER SPEED 30-1/8000sec
ISO 200-1600
EXPOSURE MODES PASM +Auto, 6 Scene
FLASH Pop-up and TTL hotshoe
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR TTL OPT/ 2in
OTHER Custom functions, depth of field preview
POWER Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 140 x 111 x 78mm/600g

6 Mega Pixels

PROS Speed, handling, image quality, remote control
CONS Occasionally weak yellow and blues, no PC socket

WDC SCORE 90%

SUMMARY **Disappointing upgrade, but superb speed, features and images**

TESTED July 2005

£599 Estimated Street Price (£700 RRP) — Pentax *ist DS

CMOS 6.31MP, 6.1MP effective
LENS Interchangeable Pentax mount
SHUTTER SPEED 30-1/4000sec & Bulb
ISO 200-3200
EXPOSURE MODES PASM +Auto, 6 Scene
FLASH Pop-up and TTL hotshoe
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR OPT/ 2in
OTHER SD, 18 custom functions, depth of field preview
POWER 4xAA rechargeable or 2x CRV3 cells
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 125 x 92.5 x 66mm/505g

6 Mega Pixels

PROS Excellent image quality for pixel count
CONS Few to mention

WDC SCORE 88%

SUMMARY **Small but fully featured, the *ist DS gives great images for the price**

TESTED Mar 2005

£650 Estimated Street Price (£1500 RRP) — Olympus E1

CCD 5.5MP
LENS Interchangeable 4/3 mount
SHUTTER SPEED 60-1/4000sec &Bulb
ISO 100-3200
EXPOSURE MODES P (with program shifts), A, S, M
FLASH No
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical, 1.8in TFT
OTHER RAW PC socket,RAW,CF
POWER Rechargeable Li-Ion (inc)
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 141x104x81mm, 660g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Great image quality, easy to use, versatile
CONS Focusing can be slow, no built in flash

WDC SCORE 93%

SUMMARY **The clean images more than make up for the fact that this is only 5MP**

TESTED Dec 2003

£680 Estimated Street Price (£1150 RRP) — Konica Minolta Dynax 7D

CCD 6.1MP eff (6.3MP total)
LENS Minolta A-type bayonet
SHUTTER SPEED 30-1/4000 sec & Bulb
ISO 100-3200
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M
FLASH PC socket/Hotshoe /Built-in
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical TTL, 2.5in
OTHER CF, 3FPS, RAW, JPEG, USB 2.0
POWER Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 150 x 106 x 77.5mm/760g

6 Mega Pixels

PROS Fully featured, build, good images, anti-shake
CONS Too many buttons, harsh noise reduction

WDC SCORE 88%

SUMMARY **An excellent first DSLR with great build quality and good results**

TESTED Feb 2005

£750 Estimated Street Price (£1900RRP) — Nikon D100

CCD 6.1MP
LENS MOUNT Nikon AF
SHUTTER SPEED 30-1/4000sec &Bulb
ISO 200-1600
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M
FLASH GN 11@auto
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical, 1.68in TFT
OTHER 26 custom settings,RAW,CF
POWER Li-ion pack
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 144x116x80mm

6 Mega Pixels

PROS Colour fidelity, image processing speed
CONS Dark flash exposures, command duplication

WDC SCORE 88%

SUMMARY **D100 involves a lot of learning, but it's worth it. Solid handling with great lenses**

TESTED Nov 2002

£900 Estimated Street Price (£1000 RRP) — Panasonic LC1

CCD 4.92MP (eff)
LENS 28-90mm
SHUTTER SPEED 1/8-1/4000 sec
ISO 100,200,400
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M
FLASH GN 4m @auto/wide
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR EVF, 2.5in
OTHER SD, RAW, USB 2.0, manual focus
POWER Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 82x135x103mm/630g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Handling, LCD, flash, image quality
CONS Limiting ISO, EVF

WDC SCORE 90%

SUMMARY **Less bucks than the Leica Digilux 2 for essentially the same camera**

TESTED June 2004

£900 Estimated Street Price (£1270 RRP) — Canon 20D

CMOS 8.2 MP Eff/ 8.5 Total
LENS Canon EOS EF, EF-S
SHUTTER SPEED 30 – 1/8,000sec
ISO 100-3200
EXPOSURE MODES Auto, P,A,S,M, Scenes
FLASH GN 12 @ISO 100
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR OPT/ 1.8in
OTHER CF I/II
POWER Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 44 x 106 x 72 mm/770g

8 Mega Pixels

PROS Good image quality, good spec, versatile
CONS Depth of field button awkward, clunky software

WDC SCORE 91%

SUMMARY **Simply the best DSLR for the price on the market at the time of testing**

TESTED Dec 2004

£950 Estimated Street Price (£1100 RRP) — Sigma SD10

CCD 3.4MPx3Fovean (10.2MP total)
LENS Sigma SA bayonet mount
SHUTTER SPEED 30-1/6000 sec & Bulb
ISO 100,200,400,800, 1600
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M,
FLASH No
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical TTL, 1.8in
OTHER RAW recording only,CF
POWER 4xAA or 2xCR-V3
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 152 x 120 x 79mm/950g

3 Mega Pixels

PROS Image quality, price, lens range
CONS RAW only, software clunky, no PC socket

WDC SCORE 83%

SUMMARY **If you can handle the manual processing, it does the job for a good price**

TESTED Jan 2004

£1170 Estimated Street Price (£1600 RRP) — Fujifilm S3 Pro

CCD 6.17 'S', 6.17 'R' MP, 12MP output
LENS Nikon F mount
SHUTTER SPEED 30-1/4000sec & Bulb
ISO 100-1600
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M
FLASH PC socket, Hotshoe, Built-in
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR OPT, 2in
OTHER CF, xD, 2.5fps, RAW, JPEG, USB2.0, IEEE 1394
POWER 4x AA NiMH batteries, optional AC adaptor
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 47.8 x 135.3 x 78.5mm, 815g

6 Mega Pixels

PROS Image quality, ease of use, sensor
CONS Software clunky, slow drive, small buffer

WDC SCORE 85%

SUMMARY **It may be a slow operator but image quality is superb**

TESTED Mar 2005

£1230 Estimated Street Price (£1300 RRP) — Leica Digilux 2

CCD 4.92MP (eff)
LENS 28-90mm
SHUTTER SPEED 1/8-1/4000sec
ISO 100,200,300
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M
FLASH GN 4m @Auto/wide
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR EVF, 2.5in
OTHER SD, RAW, USB 2.0, Manual focus
POWER Li-Ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 82x135x103mm, 630g

5 Mega Pixels

PROS Excellent image quality, handling, design
CONS Expensive, low ISO range, EVF may be unpopular

WDC SCORE 89%

SUMMARY **A great piece of kit, though I can't help feeling it is overpriced**

TESTED May 2004

£2000 Estimated Street Price (£2000 RRP) — Epson RD1

CCD 6MP effective
LENS Interchangeable EM mount
SHUTTER SPEED 1-1/2000sec & B
ISO 200-1600
EXPOSURE MODES Manual, Aprture Priority AE
FLASH Hotshoe/ PC (X-sync)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Real size optical/ 2.0" LCD
OTHER SD, optical rangefinder, JPEG, RAW
POWER Li-Ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 88.5x142x39.5mm/590g

6 Mega Pixels

PROS Build, design, innovative features, RAW plug-in
CONS Vignetting, no PC connection

WDC SCORE 85%

SUMMARY **Quirky and fun, the world's first digital rangefinder has some image issues**

TESTED Feb 2005

£2150 Estimated Street Price (£2500 RRP) — Nikon D2Hs

CCD 4MP effective JFET
LENS Nikon fit
SHUTTER SPEED 30-1/8000sec & B
ISO 200-1600
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M, ±5EV
FLASH Hotshoe
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Real size optical/ 2.5" LCD
OTHER CF, 9fps, RAW, TIFF, JPEG, USB 2.0
POWER Li-Ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 158 x 150 x 86 mm/1150g

4 Mega Pixels

PROS Handling, image quality, system support, speed
CONS 4MP may not be enough

WDC SCORE 91%

SUMMARY **Fast, fun and furious, however it only has a 4MP CCD**

TESTED Oct 2005

£3000 Estimated Street Price (£3500RRP) — Nikon D2X

CMOS 12MP effective
LENS MOUNT Interchangeable Nikon AF
SHUTTER SPEED 30-1/8000sec & Bulb
ISO 100-800
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M, ±5EV
FLASH Hotshoe/ PC (X-sync)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical/ 2.5" LCD
OTHER CFI/II, JPEG, RAW, TIFF, 5fps over 21 in Jpeg mode
POWER Li-ion EN-EL4
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 157 x 149.5 x 85.5mm/1070g

12 Mega Pixels

PROS Great design, image quality, speed, features
CONS Single card slot, some faint fringing, software

WDC SCORE 95%

SUMMARY **Superb handling and packed with features, little to criticise**

TESTED May 2005

£3080 Estimated Street Price (£3500RRP) — Canon Eos 1D MKII

CCD 8.0MP effective
LENS Canon EOS EF Mount
SHUTTER SPEED 30-1/8000sec
ISO 50-3200
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M ±3EV
FLASH Hotshoe/PC
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR TTL/2.0in LCD
OTHER CF, SD, 8fps over 40 frames,RAW
POWER NiMH
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 156x158x80mm/1220g

8 Mega Pixels

PROS Superb image quality, rapid capture, design
CONS Buggy software, the price

WDC SCORE 92%

SUMMARY **A more affordable alternative to the EOS 1D that matches its performance**

TESTED July 2004

£5200 Estimated Street Price (£6000RRP) — Canon Eos 1DS MKII

CMOS 16.7MP effective Full frame
LENS MOUNT Interchangeable EF mount
SHUTTER SPEED 30-1/8000sec & Bulb
ISO 100-1600
EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M, ±3EV
FLASH Hotshoe/ PC (X-sync)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Real size optical/ 2.0" LCD
OTHER SD, CFI&II, JPEG, RAW, JPEG+RAW
POWER Ni-MH pack
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 156 x 158 x 80mm/1215g

16 Mega Pixels

PROS Superb image quality, camera body design
CONS None really, but a larger LCD would be nice

WDC SCORE 96%

SUMMARY **Quite simply, as good as it gets. Canon has another scorcher**

TESTED Apr 2005

The TOP printers & paper

Buying a printer? These are our picks. We've listed photo paper too

6"x4" home printer

£150 Street Price — Epson Picturemate

TYPE & RESOLUTION 6 x 4 inch Inkjet/Up to 5760 x 1440dpi
FEATURES Pictbridge compatible, direct printing from memory cards and Bluetooth option with adaptor
SUMMARY ***Good colours & sharpness, this compact option is cheap to run, but slow***
WDC SCORE 85% MAR 2005

£150 Street Price — Kodak PrinterDock

TYPE & RESOLUTION 6 x 4 inch dye-sub/ not disclosed
FEATURES Pictbridge compatible, will recharge a Kodak digital camera
SUMMARY ***Print quality is good, although not competitive at around 50p a print***
WDC SCORE 85% MAR 2005

£150 Street Price — Canon CP330

TYPE & RESOLUTION 6 x 4 inch dye-sub/300dpi
FEATURES Lithium-ion battery, Pictbridge compatible, range of paper sizes, including sticker prints
SUMMARY ***Produces good-quality prints at a reasonable price. Portable, thanks to battery***
WDC SCORE 83% MAR 2005

£170 Street Price — Canon DS700

TYPE & RESOLUTION 6 x 4 inch Inkjet/ up to 4800 x 1200dpi
FEATURES Card slots, Pictbridge compatible, includes infrared remote and uses a TV as a display monitor
SUMMARY ***Low profile device that is easy to use with a TV. Print quality is on the warm side***
WDC SCORE 82% MAR 2005

£90 Street Price — Lexmark P315

TYPE & RESOLUTION 4800x1200dpi
FEATURES Pictbridge, card slots for all current media cards, Jpeg only
SUMMARY ***Not the fastest or best, but simple inexpensive and serviceable***
WDC SCORE 83% AUG 2005

£180 Street Price — HP 375

TYPE & RESOLUTION 6x4 Inkjet, 4800x1200dpi
FEATURES Bluetooth, LCD, Memory card slots, PictBridge support
SUMMARY ***Fast, compact and versatile unit, prints can be grainy***
WDC SCORE 82% MAR 2005

£150 Street Price — Olympus P10

TYPE & RESOLUTION 6 x 4 inch dye-sub/310dpi
FEATURES Uses single ribbon cartridge. Pictbridge compatible, small footprint
SUMMARY ***Very fast unit, however it is noisy and print quality is poor***
WDC SCORE 79% MAR 2005

£176 Street Price — Sanyo DVP-P1EX

TYPE & RESOLUTION 6x4in 3 dye-sub/310dpi
FEATURES Dye-sub, integrated card slots, PictBridge support
SUMMARY ***Fast, good print quality, small footprint, however, it's noisy***
WDC SCORE 73% FEB 2004

A4 Size home printer

£200 Street Price — Canon iP6000D

TYPE & RESOLUTION A4 Inkjet/1200 x 4800 dpi
FEATURES Card slots, Pictbridge compatible, dual paper trays, CDR/DVD printing, infrared wireless port
SUMMARY ***Refined and versatile unit producing good quality prints***
WDC SCORE 90% FEB 2005

£170 Street Price — Canon iP5000

TYPE & RESOLUTION A4 Inkjet /2400 x 9600 dpi
FEATURES Pictbridge compatible, dual paper trays, integral duplex unit, CDR/DVD print
SUMMARY ***Fast, quiet and produces good photo prints, however it is pricey***
WDC SCORE 88% FEB 2005

£300 Street Price — Epson R800

TYPE & RESOLUTION A4 Inkjet/Up to 5760x1440dpi
FEATURES 8 dye-based inks, eight tanks Extended gamut pigment photo inks
SUMMARY ***Pleasing print quality and solid build, although it isn't Pictbridge compatible***
WDC SCORE 88% MAR SUPP 2005

£330 Street Price — Canon iP8500

TYPE & RESOLUTION A4 Inkjet/4800 x 2400dpi
FEATURES Pictbridge support, dual paper trays, integral duplex unit, CDR/DVD printing, USB 2.0
SUMMARY ***A fast device with excellent colour range and sharpness, however it isn't cheap***
WDC SCORE 87% MAR SUPP 2005

£399 Street Price — Olympus P440

RESOLUTION A4 dye-sub/314dpi
TRANSPARENCY UNIT No
FEATURES xD and PCMCIA card slots, colour LCD screen
SUMMARY ***As'real' as you can get without having a pro lab in your home. Unit print cost about £2***
WDC SCORE 87% FEB 2004

£100 Street Price — Lexmark P915

TYPE & RESOLUTION A4 Inkjet/ 1200 x 4800dpi
FEATURES Long lasting Evercolor ink cartridge, Pictbridge compatible, Memory card slots
SUMMARY ***Great value, good fade-resistant photo prints, though could be faster***
WDC SCORE 85% FEB 2005

£85 Street Price — Epson R200

TYPE & RESOLUTION A4 Inkjet/Up to 5760x1440dpi
FEATURES 6 dye-based inks, six tanks. Single-colour ink tanks, CD printing
SUMMARY ***Remarkable specification for the price***
WDC SCORE 84% FEB 2005

£170 Street Price — HP 8150

TYPE & RESOLUTION A4 Inkjet/1200 x 4800dpi
FEATURES Memory card slots, Pictbridge compatible, optional Bluetooth and 10 x 15cm double sided prints
SUMMARY ***Range of features, however borderless printing is unsatisfactory***
WDC SCORE 84% FEB 2005

£250 Street Price — HP 8450

TYPE & RESOLUTION A4 inkjet/4800 x 1200dpi
FEATURES Pictbridge compatible, Memory card slots, double- sided photo print adaptor
SUMMARY ***Relatively good value and easy to use, however it is relatively slow and large***
WDC SCORE 84% MAR SUPP 2005

£249 Street Price — Canon i905D

TYPE & RESOLUTION A4 Inkjet/4800x1200dpi
FEATURES 6 dye-based inks, six tanks Single-colour ink tanks
SUMMARY ***Print direct from memory cards or PictBridge cameras, true photo inks***
WDC SCORE 83% JUNE 2004

A3 Size home printer

£500 Street Price — Epson R2400

TYPE & RESOLUTION A3+ Inkjet, 5760x1400 dpi
FEATURES USB 2.0, Firewire, borderless printing possible, roll printing
SUMMARY ***Highly recommended. Design is good, but the results are better***
WDC SCORE 93% AUG 2005

£400 Street Price — Epson R1800

TYPE & RESOLUTION A3+ Inkjet 5760x1440 dpi optimised
FEATURES Epson Ultra Chrome Hi-Gloss inks, PictBridge
SUMMARY ***A spanking printer with good out-of-the-box colour***
WDC SCORE 87% MAY 2005

£350 Street Price — Epson 1290S

TYPE & RESOLUTION A3+ Inkjet/ 2880 x 720dpi
FEATURES Epson Quick Dry 6 colour inks, panoramic photo formats
SUMMARY ***Good tonal range, prints can look a little soft thanks to the low resolution***
WDC SCORE 79% OCT 2003

£280 Street Price — Canon i6500

TYPE & RESOLUTION A3+ Inkjet/2880 x 1200dpi
FEATURES 4 CMYK ink tanks, advanced MicroFine Droplet Technology,
SUMMARY ***Very fast and reasonably priced, but picture quality lacks bite***
WDC SCORE 75% OCT 2003

£549 Street Price — Canon i9950

TYPE & RESOLUTION A3+ Inkjet/4800x1200dpi
FEATURES 8 dye-based inks, eight tanks. Single colour ink tanks. Available May 2004
SUMMARY ***8-ink ChromaPLUS photo system***

Multi Function all-in-one printer,scanner &copier

£159 Street Price — Epson CX6400

PRINTER A4 Inkjet/ 5760dpi optimised
SCANNER/OTHER 1200x2400/copier
INKS Epson Durabrite pigment inks
SUMMARY ***A no-frills unit offering good value and good all round performance***
WDC SCORE 81% SEPT 2004

£299 Street Price — Canon MP730

PRINTER A4 Inkjet/4800x1200dpi
SCANNER/OTHER 1200x2400ppi/copier/fax
INKS 3 colours and black
SUMMARY ***Impressive scanning but prints are disappointing. Well specified and good value, though***
WDC SCORE 80% SEPT 2004

£149 Street Price — Canon MP370

PRINTER A4 Inkjet 4800x1200dpi
SCANNER/OTHER 1200x2400ppi/copier/ PictBridge
INKS 3 colours and black
SUMMARY ***A great looker and competitively priced but falls short in use. It has got PictBridge, though***
WDC SCORE 78% SEPT 2004

£200 Street Price — Canon MP390

PRINTER A4 Inkjet/ 4800x1200dpi
SCANNER/OTHER 1200x2400ppi CIS A4 scanner, copier,fax
INKS 4 inks (black pigment, colour dyes) 2 tanks
SUMMARY ***With card and camera support this offers photo features along with the office functions***
WDC SCORE 77% JUNE 2004

£130 Street Price — HP PSC1350

PRINTER A4 Inkjet/4800x1200dpi
SCANNER/OTHER 600x2400ppi/copier
INKS 3 colour plus black, optional photo cartidge
SUMMARY ***It's a bit loud for the home environment but the scanner is quick with good density***
WDC SCORE 73% SEPT 2004

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The TOP scanners

For best-quality scans from prints, negs and trannies

Inkjet Paper
A4 Size

£11 Sample Price — **ICI Olmec** A4

SAMPLE PRICE £11 A4 Photo Inkjet Glossy (20 sheets 260gsm) **CONTACT** www.ici-imagedata.com
SUMMARY ***Good quality ink-jet photo papers from a trusted brand. A number of own-brand papers appear to share the same manufacturer.***

£7.99 Sample Price — **Jessops** A4

SAMPLE PRICE £7.99 A4 Photo Inkjet Glossy (20 sheets 260gsm) **CONTACT** www.jessops.com
SUMMARY ***Competitively priced papers in many finishes. Samples of heavier weight glossy we tested worked very well with most printers and appear the same as Olmec equivalents***

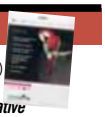
£9.99 Sample Price — **Permajet** A4

SAMPLE PRICE £12.95 A4 Instant Dry Gloss (25 sheets 271gsm) **CONTACT** www.novadarkroom.com
SUMMARY ***Permajet papers all resist fading, meaning they are acid-free and incorporate anti-UV. Available in many weights and finishes with the fine-art market in mind.***

£20 Sample Price — **Hahnemühle** A4

SAMPLE PRICE £20 Digital Fine Art Paper A4 Range Pack (sampler of 20 sheets) **CONTACT** www.hahnemuhle.com
SUMMARY ***Hahnemuhle has become one of the most respected manufacturers of coated fine-art papers and boards for archival ink-jet printing, including cotton-based 'rag' papers.***

£49.35 Sample Price — **Lyson** A4



SAMPLE PRICE £9.02 A4 Pro Colour Gloss (240gsm 20 sheets) **CONTACT** www.lyson.com
SUMMARY ***Lyson has forged a reputation for alternative inks aimed at enthusiasts and pros, and has a range of archival papers in various finishes and weights, including roll paper.***

£20 Sample Price — **St Cuthberts Mill** A4

SAMPLE PRICE £20 A4 Enhanced Velvet (225gsm 25 sheets) **CONTACT** www.inveresk.co.uk/stcuth
SUMMARY ***St Cuthberts Mill is home to the famous Somerset fine-art paper ranges of which a selection is available in specially coated form for archival ink-jet use.***

£10 Sample Price — **Jet Tec** A4

SAMPLE PRICE £10 A4 High Quality Photo Glossy Inkjet Paper (20 sheets 272gsm) **CONTACT** www.jettec.co.uk
SUMMARY ***Jet Tec is a UK-based manufacturer of third party inks for ink-jet printers. To accompany its inks, Jet Tec markets a range of ink-jet papers including photo-quality papers.***

£15.26 Sample Price — **Tetenal** A4

SAMPLE PRICE £15.26 A4 Photo Glossy (272gsm 20 sheets) **CONTACT** www.tetenal.co.uk
SUMMARY ***Tetenal is famous for its darkroom developers, but is also a significant inkjet media player, with its Spectra Jet papers ranging in weight and finish, including an archival glossy paper.***

£8.99 Sample Price — **PC Line** A4

SAMPLE PRICE £8.99 A4 Premium Ink Jet Paper (20 sheets 240gsm (est.)) **CONTACT** www.pcworld.co.uk
SUMMARY ***The Dixons Group own-brand ink-jet paper brand. We've tried several samples of PC Line glossy photo paper and the results were poor. It's not that cheap either.***

£49.35 Sample Price — **Innova** A4

SAMPLE PRICE £49.35 A4 Soft-Textured Art Fourdrinier Acid Free (315gsm 50 sheets) **CONTACT** www.innovaart.com
SUMMARY ***Aimed at the archival and exhibition markets, with high-tech coated media based on traditional acid-free paper bases. Also available through OEM brands.***

Flatbed
home scanner

£179 Street Price — **Canon** 8400F

RESOLUTION 3200x6400ppi
TRANSPARENCY UNIT Yes
FEATURES Multi-photo scan, USB 2.0, FARE scratch removal
SUMMARY ***Very fast and producing good-quality scans***
WDC SCORE 91% APRIL 2005

£350 Street Price — **Epson** 4990

RESOLUTION 4800x9600 ppi
TRANSPARENCY UNIT Yes
FEATURES Holders for film up to 5x4, Silver Fast AE, PS Elements 2, USB 2, Digital ICE
SUMMARY ***Good results and verstatility, but not the cheapest on the block***
WDC SCORE 90% MAY 2005

£350 Street Price — **Epson** 4870

TYPE & RESOLUTION 4800x9600ppi
TRANSPARENCY UNIT Yes
FEATURES Full-width TPU, 24 film frames, 8 slides capacity, roll film, 5x4in, Digital ICE
SUMMARY ***Highest spec consumer scanner yet***
WDC SCORE 90% AUG 2004

£139 Street Price — **Canon** LIDE 80

TYPE & RESOLUTION 2400x4800ppi
TRANSPARENCY UNIT Yes
FEATURES Single-frame 35mm film scanning, CIS, USB2.0
SUMMARY ***Ultra-slim, fast and great results – WDC's Scanner of the Year 2003***
WDC SCORE 90% AWARDS ISSUE 2003

£129 Street Price — **Epson** 2580

TYPE & RESOLUTION Flatbed, 2400x4800ppi
TRANSPARENCY UNIT Yes
FEATURES USB 2.0, colour restoration & dust removal
SUMMARY ***Well-specified model producing great results for a low price***
WDC SCORE 89% JAN 2005

£129 Street Price — **Canon** 8000F

TYPE & RESOLUTION 2400x4600ppi
TRANSPARENCY UNIT Yes
FEATURES Scans 12 35mm film frames, FARE dust and scratch removal, USB 2.0
SUMMARY ***Good all-rounder, no roll film support***
WDC SCORE 88% MAR 2003

£200 Street Price — **HP** 5530

TYPE & RESOLUTION 2400x4800ppi
TRANSPARENCY UNIT Yes
FEATURES Automatic postcard print stack and feeder
SUMMARY ***6x4in print feeder – unique to HP***
WDC SCORE 87% AUGUST 2004

£339 Street Price — **Canon** 9950F

TYPE & RESOLUTION Flatbed A4
TRANSPARENCY UNIT Yes
FEATURES Holders up to 5x4, PS Elements 2, USB 2, FARE
SUMMARY ***Good image and build quality, but FARE is less effective than Digital ICE***
WDC SCORE 87% MAY 2005

£116 Street Price — **HP** 4670

TYPE & RESOLUTION 2400x2400ppi
TRANSPARENCY UNIT Yes
FEATURES Vertical or flat operation, see-through design
SUMMARY ***Beautifully designed, but average scan quality and speed***
WDC SCORE 86% APRIL 2005

£200 Street Price — **Epson** 4180

TYPE & RESOLUTION 4800dpi x Sub 9600dpi
TRANSPARENCY UNIT Yes
FEATURES Alternate 6 lines colour MatrixCCD
SUMMARY ***Versatile unit producing sharp scans, but a little expensive***
WDC SCORE 86% APRIL 2005

Film
home scanner

£600 Street Price — **Minolta** 5400

FILM SIZE & RESOLUTION 35mm/5400ppi
FEATURES USB 2.0, Digital ICE4 dust and scratch removal included
SUMMARY ***Incredibly high resolution***
WDC SCORE 91% SEPT 2004

£300 Street Price — **Minolta** Scan Dual IV

TYPE 35mm/APS Film scanner
FEATURES USB 2.0, 3200PPI resolution
SUMMARY ***Price, speed and quality make it good for a medium number of scans***
WDC SCORE 90% AUG 2005

£549 Street Price — **Epson** F-3200

FILM SIZE & RESOLUTION Up to 5x4, 3200dpi/6400dpi with micro step
FEATURES USB 2, FireWire, 6X4 print scanning function
SUMMARY ***Great for multi format***
WDC SCORE 90% JUNE 2005

£800 Street Price — **Microtek** 4000TF

RESOLUTION 4000ppi
FILM SIZE 35mm
FEATURES USB, Firewire
SUMMARY ***SilverFast Ai Pro 6 software bundled***
WDC SCORE 90% OCT 2004

£2500 Street Price — **Nikon** LS9000

FILM SIZE & RESOLUTION 35mm and 6x9cm roll film/4000ppi
FEATURES Digital ICE4/ROC, Firewire
SUMMARY ***Multi-format film scanner***
WDC SCORE 89% AUGUST 2004

£2276 Street Price — **Minolta** Pro

FILM SIZE & RESOLUTION 35mm, 120/220 roll film up to 6x9cm/4800ppi
FEATURES Ultra SCSI, Firewire, Digital ICE3 dust and scratch removal
SUMMARY ***Capable of scanning roll film***
WDC SCORE 88% JULY 2004

£520 Street Price — **Nikon** Coolscan LS50

FILM SIZE & RESOLUTION 35mm / 4000ppi
FEATURES USB 2.0, Digital ICE4 dust and scratch removal
SUMMARY ***High resolution, fast and easy to use. Also known as the Coolscan V***
WDC SCORE 76% APRIL 2003

£1099 Street Price — **Nikon** LS5000

FILM SIZE & RESOLUTION 35mm/4000ppi
FEATURES 48-bit, 16-bit a/d, Digital ICE4 dust and scratch removal, USB 2.0
SUMMARY ***Very fast – 20 seconds per frame***

£400 Street Price — **Microtek** 3600

FILM SIZE & RESOLUTION 35mm/1800ppi
FEATURES USB, 36-bit
SUMMARY ***Simple manual feed film scanner for the budget-conscious***

£449 Street Price — **Canon** FS4000US

FILM SIZE & RESOLUTION 35mm, APS/4000dpi
FEATURES APS adapter included, FARE dust and scratch removal, SCSI and USB, accepts strips and slide mounts
SUMMARY ***Competitively priced. Includes APS option***

THE BUYERS' GUIDE
hard drives & software

The TOP portable drives & software

Software to improve your images and the best storage devices

Portable Hard drives
Storage devices

£350 Street Price — Epson P2000

DESCRIPTION 40GB Multimedia Viewer
PLATFORMS Windows/Mac
FEATURES 3.8in LCD, MP3, JPEG, RAW, TIFF, AAC, MPEG 4
SUMMARY ***The great screen and compatibility with Epson printers makes this a serious bit of kit***
WDC SCORE 92% JAN 2005

£350 Street Price — Apple iPod Photo

DESCRIPTION 40/60GB Multimedia player
PLATFORMS Windows/Mac
FEATURES AAC, MP3, WAY, JPEG,AIFF, GIF, BMP, PNG,
SUMMARY ***Limited functions, with reliance on computer. Good music player, better functionality with iPod connector***
WDC SCORE 84% MAR 2005

£400 Street Price — Nikon Coolwalker

DESCRIPTION Photo player
PLATFORMS Windows/Mac
FEATURES CF slot, USB 2, 2.5in screen, JPEG, TIFF, NEF
SUMMARY ***Understandably Nikoncentric, but easy to use and quick to use and learn***
WDC SCORE 83% JULY 2005

£300 Street Price — Innoplus Phototainer

FEATURES JPEG viewer, MP3 and MJPEG video player with 3.5in colour screen. CF I&II only, adaptors for other cards extra. **CAPACITY** 30GB
SUMMARY ***Very similar to the Smartdisk Flashtrax Multi Media Viewer***
WDC SCORE 80% APR 2005

£315 Street Price — Vosonic MMV VP6300

DESCRIPTION Multimedia Viewer
PLATFORMS Windows/Media
Features 20GB, 2in screen
SUMMARY ***Simple, effective and reasonably priced player that just works***
WDC SCORE 85% APR 2005

£400 Street Price — Jobo Giga Vue

DESCRIPTION Picture Viewer
PLATFORMS Windows, Mac
Features 40/60GB, USB 2.0, RAW support, 320 x 480 pixel screen
SUMMARY ***A touch sensitive screen and RAW support are among the top features of this cool device***
WDC SCORE 87% APR 2005

£258 Street Price — Tatung Elio Photo Jukebox

DESCRIPTION MultiMedia player
PLATFORMS Windows/Mac
FEATURES 20GB, 3.5in LCD, JPEG, TIFF, MP3. SD, USB 2.0,
SUMMARY ***Small enough for your pocket but better suited for MP3s than photos***
WDC SCORE 80% APR 2005

£179 Street Price — Addonics MFR CD Burner

DESCRIPTION CD burner/ DVDS player
PLATFORMS Windows
Features Portable USB 2.0 CD burner, DVD playback
SUMMARY ***If only it had 5.1 Dolby sound this little portable player could replace your domestic DVD player***
WDC SCORE 92% AUG 2004

£299 Street Price — Apacer Disc Steno CP-200

FEATURES Li-ion powered Portable CD burner with 24x read, 24x write, 10x re-write, USB 2.0. Quite large.
SUPPORTS CF Type I/II, SD, MMC, MS, SM
SUMMARY ***Back up to CDs on the road while the improved interface provides greater piece of mind***
WDC SCORE 91% JUL 2004

£195 Street Price — Sony HDPS M1

DESCRIPTION Portable Hard Drive
PLATFORMS Windows
FEATURES 40GB, USB 2.0, CF I/II, MS Pro/Duo
SUMMARY ***Easy to use and reasonably priced but the software could be better***
WDC SCORE 88% APR 2005

Editing
software

£522 Street Price — Adobe Photoshop CS2

DESCRIPTION Image Editing Suite
PLATFORMS Mac OS X/ Windows 2000/XP
DOWNLOADABLE TRIAL www.adobe.com
SUMMARY ***The biggest and best version yet, with even more photographic tools***
WDC SCORE 91% JULY 2005

£69 Street Price — Adobe Photoshop Elements 3.0

DESCRIPTION Image Editing Suite
PLATFORMS Mac OS X/ Windows 2000/XP
DOWNLOADABLE TRIAL www.adobe.com
SUMMARY ***At a tenth of the price of the full version, this is a bargain and a worthy upgrade to version 2.***
WDC SCORE 90% JAN 2005

£60 Street Price — Ulead Photoimpact 10

DESCRIPTION Image Editing Suite
PLATFORMS Windows 98SE, 2000, Me or XP
DOWNLOADABLE TRIAL www.ulead.com
SUMMARY ***If you're looking for a cheaper rival to Photoshop, it could be what you need***
WDC SCORE 90% FEB 2005

£100 Street Price — Corel Paintshop Pro 9.0

DESCRIPTION Image Editing Suite
PLATFORMS Windows 98SE and up
DOWNLOADABLE TRIAL www.corel.com
SUMMARY ***Unique features put PSP 9 above many of its competitors, and it is an essential tool for Windows users***
WDC SCORE 90% MAR 2005

£49 Street Price — Roxio Photosuite 7.0

DESCRIPTION Image Editing Suite
PLATFORMS www.roxio.com
DOWNLOADABLE TRIAL www.roxio.com
SUMMARY ***Fairly restrictive in some areas but fantastic CD and DVD slideshow components***
WDC SCORE 88% JULY 2004

Organising
software

£59 Street Price — Apple iPhoto

DESCRIPTION Digital Photo Management
PLATFORMS Mac OS X
DOWNLOADABLE TRIAL part of iLife 05
SUMMARY ***The best update yet to Apple's default browser, with great slideshow facilities***
WDC SCORE 89% JULY 2005

£120 Street Price — Iview Media Pro 2.5

DESCRIPTION Digital Asset Management
PLATFORMS Mac OS X/ Windows 2000/XP
DOWNLOADABLE TRIAL www.iview-multimedia.com
SUMMARY ***Catalogues a wide variety of styles quickly and effectively***
WDC SCORE 90% JUNE 2004

£489 Street Price — Fotoware Fotostation Pro 5

DESCRIPTION Catalogue
PLATFORMS Windows 2000/XP
DOWNLOADABLE TRIAL www.fotostation.com
SUMMARY ***Very good and powerful asset manager but also more expensive than most***
WDC SCORE 89% MAY 2005

£130 Street Price — Extensis Portfolio

DESCRIPTION Digital Asset Management
PLATFORMS Mac OS X/ Windows XP
DOWNLOADABLE TRIAL www.extensis.com
SUMMARY ***Powerful, fast and professional DAM system but complicated for home use***
WDC SCORE 85% FEB 2005

£88 Street Price — Corel Paintshop Photo Album 5.0

DESCRIPTION Catalogue
PLATFORMS Windows 98-XP
DOWNLOADABLE TRIAL www.corel.com
SUMMARY ***Versatile and easy to use with a very friendly price, but limited to PC only***
WDC SCORE 88% JAN 2005

Plug-ins
software

£55 Street Price — Pixel Genius Photokit Sharpener

DESCRIPTION Image sharpening
PLATFORMS Windows / Mac
DOWNLOADABLE TRIAL www.pixelgenius.com
SUMMARY ***Image sharpening workflow tool, from capture to output***
WDC SCORE 91% MAY 2004

£55 Street Price — Pixel Genius Photokit Colour

DESCRIPTION Colour tools and effects
PLATFORMS Windows 98 and up, Mac OS 9.1
DOWNLOADABLE TRIAL www.pixelgenius.com
SUMMARY ***Time-saving software capable of a wide variety of excellent results***
WDC SCORE 90% MAY 2005

£40 Street Price — Iridius PS Actions

DESCRIPTION Adobe Photoshop Actions
PLATFORMS Windows 2000/XP, Mac X
DOWNLOADABLE TRIAL www.adobe.co.uk
SUMMARY ***For the busy photographer, the Iridus action set is a fantastic, time-saving life saver***
WDC SCORE 91% NOV 2004

£140 Street Price — Extensis Photoframe 2.5

DESCRIPTION Collection of edge effects
PLATFORMS Windows / Mac
DOWNLOADABLE TRIAL www.extensis.co.uk
SUMMARY ***Combine and customise any of the 2000+ natural and digital frames or create your own***

£140 Street Price — Extensis Pixel Smart Scale

DESCRIPTION Tool for rescaling images up to 1600%
PLATFORMS Windows / Mac
DOWNLOADABLE TRIAL www.extensis.co.uk
SUMMARY ***Enlarge images beyond their natural limits, with no loss of colour or quality***

£140 Street Price — Extensis Mask Pro

DESCRIPTION Professional cut outs around complex shapes
PLATFORMS Windows, Mac
DOWNLOADABLE TRIAL www.extensis.co.uk
SUMMARY ***Complex masks, selections, clipping paths made easy. Perfect edges every time***

£100 Street Price — Nik Sharpner Pro

DESCRIPTION Pro image sharpening tool
PLATFORMS Windows/Mac
DOWNLOADABLE TRIAL www.nikmultimedia.com
SUMMARY ***Precise, controllable sharpening using a choice of criteria. Top-draw plug-in***

£99 Street Price — Real Viz Stitcher Express

DESCRIPTION Panorama creator
PLATFORMS Windows 2000, SP2, XP, Mac OSX, 10.2
DOWNLOADABLE TRIAL www.realviz.com
SUMMARY ***Simple interface and powerful stitching at a reasonable price***
WDC SCORE 88% JUNE 2005

FREE Street Price — Pixmantec Raw Shooter Essentials

DESCRIPTION Raw image processor
PLATFORMS Windows XP, 2000
DOWNLOADABLE TRIAL www.pixmantec.com
SUMMARY ***Raw conversion times are fast although the interface could be improved***
WDC SCORE 85% JUNE 2005

£95 Street Price — Genuine Fractals 4.0

DESCRIPTION Superb fractal-powered enlargement plug-in
PLATFORMS Windows / Mac
DOWNLOADABLE TRIAL www.lizardtech.com
SUMMARY ***Enlarge images up to 600% with no degredation in quality. Make big prints from small files***

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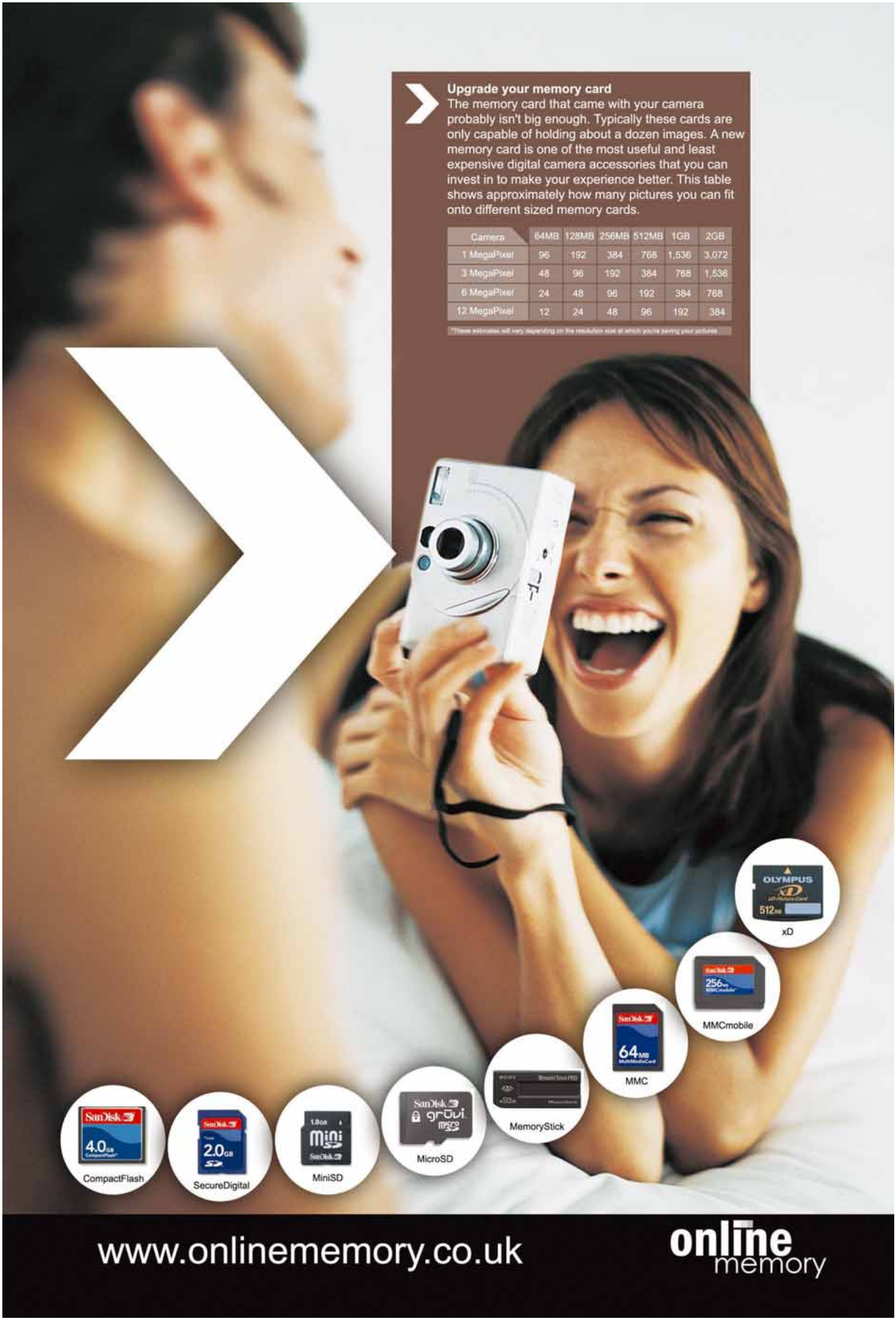
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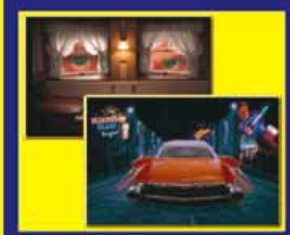

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10 Things to do... this Winter

Stuck for inspiration? Fed up with watching telly? Here are a few things you can be getting on with during the holidays and beyond

1 Shoot winter landscapes

Global warming may have made the classic snowscape a rarer sight nowadays, but if you're lucky, and especially if you live up north, you might wake up to a white Christmas or New Year. Even without snow, winter can be great for landscapes: that crisp, low light casting lovely long shadows, those atmospheric misty mornings bringing an air of cold isolation, those oppressive stormy skies creating a sense of foreboding. Or it could just be grey and hopeless. Fingers crossed, eh?

2 Sort, organise and archive

You've got pictures all over your hard drive, they're all called DSC-one thousand and something and you haven't backed them up for ages. Get organised! Find and keep all your pictures in one place ('My Pictures' is as good a place as any). Batch rename them to something sensible, and archive them to CD so you don't lose everything if your computer suddenly decides to call it a day.

3 Build a website

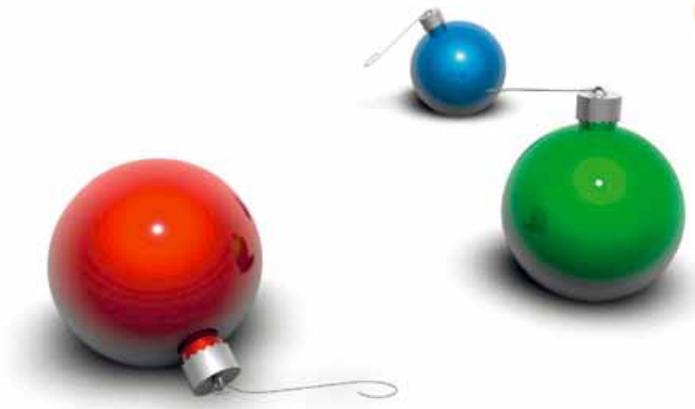
Don't keep all your best photos squirrelled away. Share them with the world! You can create a simple website in Photoshop, and there's lots of free web-building software online if you want something more ambitious. Alternatively, why not upload your pictures to an online gallery such as Photobox? If you're more for talking than showing, join the millions of other garrulous souls and start a weblog.

4 Create an AV presentation

Ah, the good old-fashioned family slideshow. Setting up the projector, hanging the screen… those were the days. Nowadays the tech-savvy photo bore inflicts his snaps on the world via the wonder of television. (Not that *your* pictures would be boring.) Most photo-editing and organising applications include a slideshow function that lets you create snazzy presentations, with clever fades and wipes, commentary and music, then burn them to DVD to play on your telly. Marvellous!

5 Shoot a Still Life

It's cold and nasty out, so what better time to have a go at still life? At Christmas there are always lots of good subjects: rustic candles, pine cones, unwanted gifts from the pound shop… Find a small space (the kitchen table will do) and use natural window light, or round up all the anglepoise lamps in the house. Use make-up mirrors and bits of foil as reflectors, and have some fun.



6 Photograph your family

Christmas is a time when the whole family is bathed in the warm glow of yuletide joy (or perhaps it's the sherry) and the relatives drop by to exchange pressies too. Take some group shots for posterity, and get some candids of the kids playing with their presents too, before they get bored with them. Remember, for best results, switch the flash off and go for atmospheric available-light shots. Raise the ISO if you need to.

7 Make your own Xmas cards

If you're less than thrilled by the thought of handing over £20 to your local stationary emporium for Xmas cards that you know will end up in the bin, then why not make your own? You'll impress your friends and family with your talent – and make them feel too guilty to throw away the fruit of all your hard work afterwards.

8 Print some photos

Because we can see our photos on screen, we seldom bother to print them. This is a shame. Think of all those bare walls and empty photo albums around Britain, crying out to be covered with prints. If you can't summon the energy to print them yourself, take them to your local print shop or upload them to an online lab. Bring your photos to life!

9 Soup up your PC

Is your PC struggling to handle your increasingly massive image files? Can you no longer use the latest software through lack of memory? Can't afford a new PC? Join the club – but you can improve things. You can buy more RAM (it's never been cheaper), invest in a USB 2.0 card to cut your download times, or free your hard drive by archiving the good data and dumping the rubbish.

10 Try new software

Step outside the cosy world of your favourite software and try some of the hundreds of other applications aimed at photographers. Whether full versions of free software such as Picasa and GIMP, or trial versions of commercial applications and plug-ins, why not give it a go? There's software out there for everything you can think of, and you never know, you might find a new favourite program. **WDC**

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WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA

Welcome to the *world of ...*

DIGITAL SLR *Photography*

Welcome to this special guide from What Digital Camera magazine. Whether you're the owner of a digital compact camera and are thinking of upgrading, or you're a 35mm SLR user yet to make the switch to digital, this guide aims to provide a taster of just what you can achieve using a digital SLR camera in general, and Nikon digital SLRs in particular.

Digital SLRs offer so many advantages over other types of camera. Compared with 35mm SLR cameras they provide the opportunity for instant feedback (a benefit which cannot be stressed enough) and zero running costs (once you've bought the camera and media cards, and excluding any prints you may wish to make). These two benefits alone mean that you can afford to experiment, to try new techniques and take more risks.

You also get individual, frame by frame control over every aspect of the image, including colour temperature and ISO sensitivity and, once downloaded to a PC (a matter of seconds when you're shooting digitally) you get virtually limitless creative control.

Users of fixed-lens digital cameras already enjoy many of these benefits, but what they don't get is the vastly improved image quality that comes from using a much larger sensor for image capture. In addition to the resolution benefits, the superior light-gathering power of DSLR sensors means that noise levels and colour fidelity are superior too; and, with RAW image processing, images also have a greatly enhanced tonal range.

There's a huge step up in responsiveness too, when you switch to a DSLR. With more direct access to key controls and functions, significantly faster focusing, reduced shutter delay and more powerful processing, photography becomes almost as quick as your reflexes allow.

Let's not forget the enormous range of accessories that become available when you switch to a digital SLR. The Nikon system includes over 100 auto and manual focus lenses and converters, plus dozens of flashguns, macro attachments and other accessories.

Okay, so you may be happy with the basic kit lens right now, but isn't it reassuring to know that if, at some point in the future, you ever want to go on safari, try astro-photography, attach your camera to a microscope or take it scuba diving, that there's an accessory available that will let you do it?

A digital SLR really is the best choice for those seeking quality, functionality, control and versatility in their photography, and with cameras as good as the Nikon D50 available for as little as £500 there's never been a better time to invest in one.

But don't just take our word for it. We've talked to five photographers, each working in a different genre of photography, who have already made the switch to a Nikon DSLR. Three are keen amateurs and two are world renowned professionals. As well as showing us a few of their breathtaking images we've asked them to tell us how their choice of camera helps them in their photography, and to share some techniques and tips to help us in our own picture taking. I hope you find it both inspirational and informative.

Nigel Atherton Editor

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When you buy a Nikon D50 you're not just buying one of the most sophisticated digital SLRs in the world. You're buying entry into the vast and ever-expanding world of Nikon photography.

Nikon has produced over 35 million lenses, and with over 100 in the current line-up, from the 10.5mm fisheye to the 1000mm super-telephoto, plus 11 flashguns and hundreds of other accessories, the Nikon system offers a world of endless possibilities. Here's a small taster.....

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*PICTURES NOT TO SCALE

LANDSCAPE *photography*

Keen photographer **Jörgen Schön** reveals how he captures the beauty of the landscape with the help of his **Nikon D70**

'I like mysterious pictures with lot of mood, and often take pictures in low light and mist,' reveals Swedish-born Jörgen Schön, photocopier repairman by day, photo enthusiast by sunrise and sunset. 'Photographing the natural world is a great source of relaxation for me; to release pressure I like to walk in and be among nature.'

Jörgen started to capture landscapes three years ago when he bought his first compact digital camera. This inspired him to invest in a digital SLR, the Nikon D70. 'I chose the Nikon D70 because it was quite a solid, well-built camera that I thought I could trust,' he recalls.

Since buying the D70, Jörgen has noticed the quality of his images coming on in leaps and bounds. 'I have more control – over manual focus, aperture and shutter speed. The great feature is that you can see through the lens and pre-empt what you get beautifully. For me, the great advantage of digital is being able to see the results immediately, and, if necessary, take new shots to correct any errors,' marvels the Swede. 'I also use the histogram a lot to control exposure.'

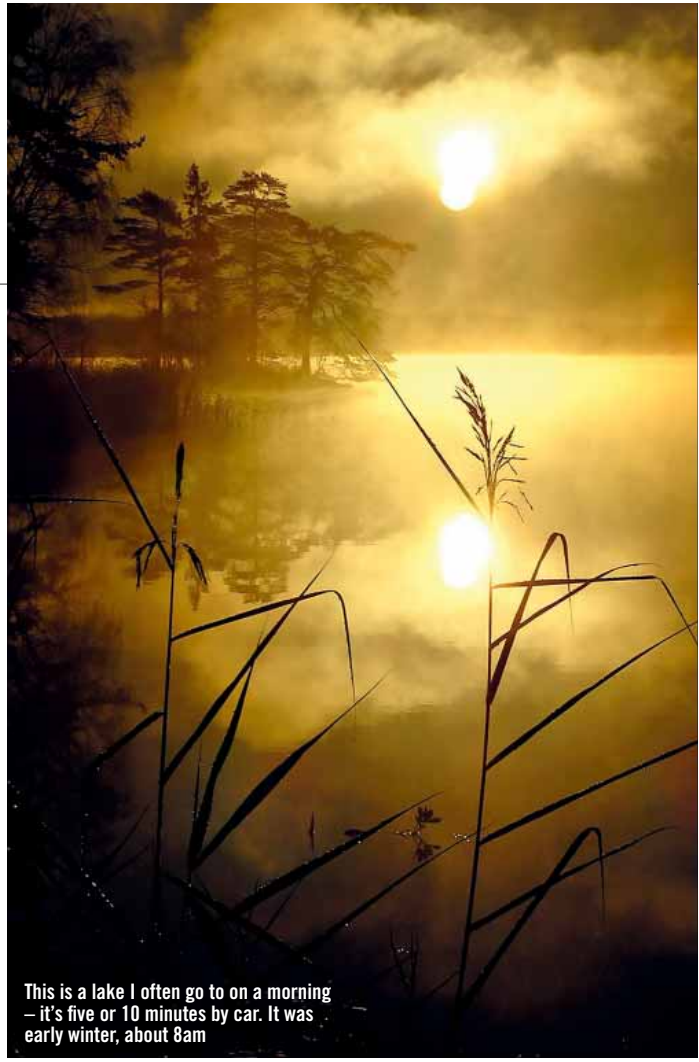
Lakes feature heavily in Jörgen's work, so it's no surprise to discover he's geographically surrounded by them. 'My subjects typically give you a good feel of what a Swedish morning is like – that's something I really like to focus on,' he says. 'I use graduated grey filters to get the correct exposure between the sky and the ground, and that often gives the images a little bit of a mood.'

The keen photographer employs a couple of Nikon lenses to capture nature in the raw – a Nikkor 18-70mm plus a 70-300mm zoom. 'The 18-70mm is perfect for shooting landscapes; the other is for shooting animals, birds, flowers and insects. I've also got a 90mm lens which is great for shooting flowers, even landscapes too sometimes.' Since Jörgen is often photographing at dawn or dusk – in low light – use of a tripod is essential. 'Early morning or evening gives the landscape a good atmosphere,' he reasons. 'I personally prefer mornings – you seem to get a wider range of colours than in the evening.'

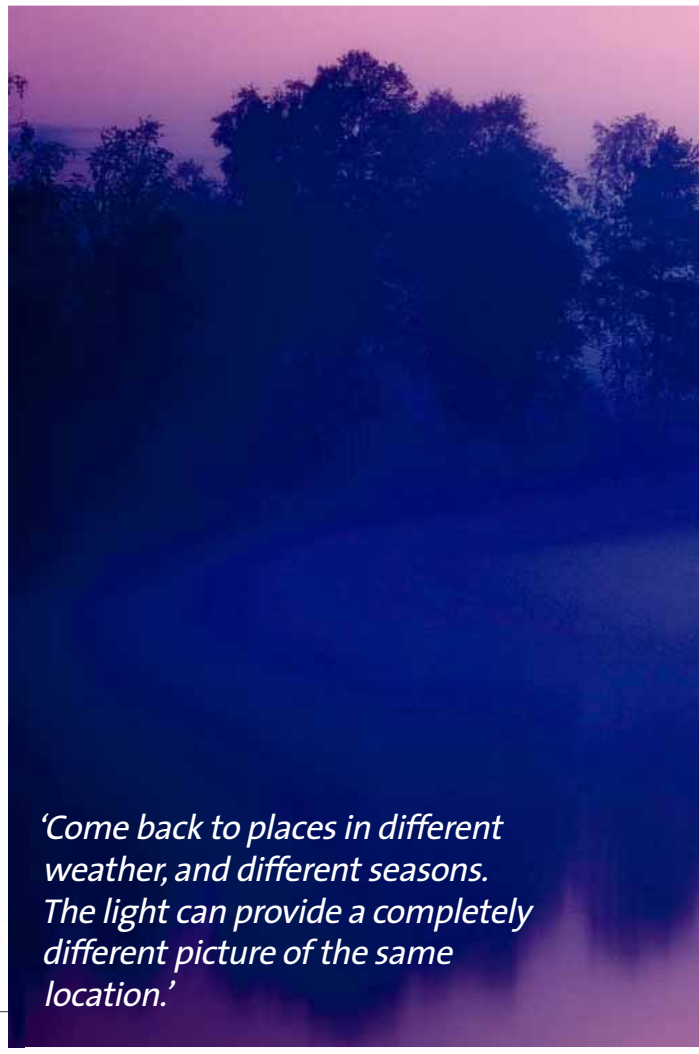
Jörgen always uses natural light, never flash. 'So how the sun lights things is very important too,' he says. And, since he is not photographing action, he has time to pick and choose his shots, and work out interesting compositions. 'I only have one 512MB memory card and always shoot in RAW format. I always go for the best quality so I can adjust the white balance later if necessary and have more opportunities for giving the shots the right quality.' Although the landscape photographer admits to using Photoshop, he claims not to manipulate images beyond fixing colour, sharpening or adding contrast.

Unlike many keen amateurs, Jörgen is lucky enough to find that his working hours are actually conducive to picture taking. 'I often spend three or four hours a day travelling. I often bring my camera out, find places that are interesting and stop and take a picture. I take the opportunity when it happens.'

For more stunning landscapes, shot on the Nikon D70, visit: ***http://www.schonfoto.fotosidan.se/***



This is a lake I often go to on a morning – it's five or 10 minutes by car. It was early winter, about 8am



'Come back to places in different weather, and different seasons. The light can provide a completely different picture of the same location.'

JORGEN'S *kit*

Nikon D70 with Nikkor 18-70mm f3.5-4.5 ED and Nikon 70-300mm f4-5.6G AF Zoom-Nikkor lenses. Supplementary items include a Manfrotto Digi 728B tripod, Cokin A121 G2 graduated grey filters, and a Hoya close-up set, plus a Tamron SP AF90mm F/2.8 Di Macro (1:1) close up lens.

Nikon D50 - *Meet the newest member of the family*

This is another place about an hour-and-a half away from my home. It has a special mood

This was taken in Sweden, in the middle of a summer night, using a long exposure of 30 seconds

TOP *tips*

Jörgen Schön's top tips for landscape photography:

1 I look a lot at pictures from top photographers to provide inspiration, and try to analyse both why the images are so good, and why I like them.

2 I usually come back to places that I like in different weather, and different seasons. The light can provide a completely different picture of the same location.

3 Try shooting in the morning or evening, as I often do, using a graduated grey filter.

4 Check the weather before you set out – that's really important to get good shots. Although you can get good shots when there's bad weather, I prefer it when there's mist in the mornings and the evenings are colourful.

5 Use tripods and work out your composition before taking the shot. Look for points of interest or devices – such as foreground detail – to lead the eye into the picture.

PERFECT *partner*

18-70mm f/3.5-4.5 G AF-S DX zoom lens

Wideangle lenses are preferred for landscape photography for their wider views, enhanced sense of perspective and greater apparent depth of field.

This stunning lens provides a useful 27-105mm (equiv) zoom range, and boasts three ED glass elements and a Silent Wave Motor (SWM) for optimum lens quality and focusing performance.

PEOPLE *photography*

Lights, camera... emotion! Hollywood-based pro **Vincent Versace** on shooting actors and models with his **D70** and **D2x**

'Photography happens in the space between the photographer and the subject. So it's important to maintain a connection,' claims Smithsonian Award-winning LA photographer and Nikon user Vincent Versace, whose environmental portrait work includes studies of actors and actresses. 'In a photo shoot I am absolutely shameless and will make an absolute fool out of myself to get the shot. Because it's the spontaneous reaction that makes the photograph.'

Vincent has been shooting on the D70 for the past 15 months, though he recently invested in a D2x. 'I just fell in love with the D70,' Vincent marvels. 'I was asked to do an advertorial with it for American Photo magazine. At first I got a little bent out of shape because I thought "this is a consumer camera and I'm a pro". But as I was doing the job I fell so in love with the D70 that I didn't shoot with my D1x for 15 months. The D70 and D70s are spectacular cameras, and I have no problem recommending them.'

Vincent's praise extends to the costlier D2x. 'It's the camera I've been waiting 15 years for: 12 megapixels, next to no signal noise – certainly the least I've seen a digital camera produce – really nice colour and it has an 11-segment focus screen that you can move the thumb control around, almost as if it's a joystick; which for portraiture is great. And then you have dynamic focus, which says "if this point moves, follow it". I make 44 x 36-inch prints as the rule rather the exception, so I didn't realise how important it was having 12 megapixels of data until I did.'

The portrait photographer chose the Nikon brand for a DSLR because of the design, in that 'they're designed like cameras rather than a piece of electronics. All the buttons work the way they're supposed to work and the optics are the sharpest I've seen.'

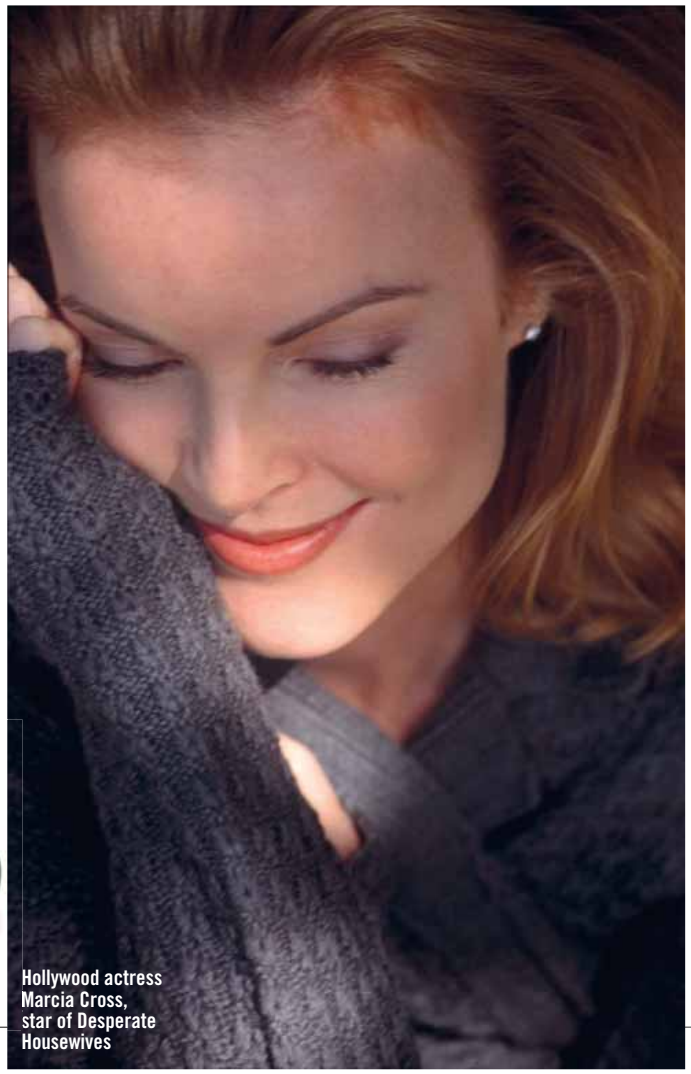
Talking of lenses, for his people shots Vincent favours a 70-200mm VR lens and a 70-210mm consumer lens. 'Sometimes the former is so sharp it's a bit too anatomically correct; so I drop down in resolution because the lenses resolve too much – which is a good problem to have,' he laughs. 'The consumer lens is no less sharp, it just smoothes out skin tones, whereas with some of the ED glass I can see the pores and every hair. I've also got a 12-24mm for wideangle, a 24-120mm and then the 70-200mm with a 2x extender and a 14mm rectilinear plus a macro lens.'

His choice of zooms comes down to the fact that Vincent always tries to minimise the weight he's carrying when out in the field. 'I consider I'll be carrying it for eight hours, so there are some advantages to zooms that fixed-focus lenses will never have. I can find a perspective I like and can zoom in for the composition I like. I compose within the frame; I don't crop.'

Fidelity not only of capture but treatment of his subjects is important to Vincent. 'I built my reputation in Hollywood on telling the truth in my pictures,' he concludes.

Visit ***www.versacephotography.com*** *for more captivating people shots.*

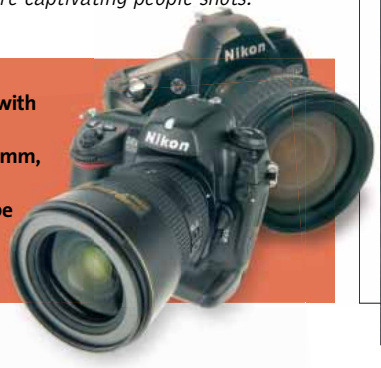
Vincent has been shooting professionally with the D70 for the past 15 months



Hollywood actress Marcia Cross, star of Desperate Housewives

VINCENT'S *kit*

Vincent shoots on Nikon D70 and D2x SLRs, with a 70-200mm VR lens, a 70-210mm consumer lens, plus a 12-24mm for wideangle, a 24-120mm, a 14mm rectilinear and a macro lens. He also favours Dynalite flash. 'The new SB800 strobe system is great in the field and fits in the palm of your hand,' he raves.



Vincent shoots most of his portraits using a professional 70-200mm VR or a 70-210mm consumer lens

Childen are great subjects but you need patience and quick reactions to capture moments like this

Get down to the child's level and don't be afraid to zoom in for a close-up

The best portraits are about capturing genuine, spontaneous emotion, says Vincent

TOP *tips*

Vincent Versace's top tips for people photography:

1 Choose a lens that gives you the perspective you like, then either zoom in or walk forwards and watch how the image changes. The beauty of zooms is that you can find the relationship of angle to height that you like and then zoom in for the best composition.

2 Strive to capture motion with stillness. With absolute spontaneity you get absolute truth. If you can capture people as they're being spontaneous that's great.

3 Shoot with reckless abandon – things happen at the speed of life – they don't happen at 8.5 fps. So the key is to shoot and shoot. The more memory you have in the camera the better.

4 To get an emotion out of my subject I'll employ what I call 'controlled insanity'.

5 There's nothing prettier than natural light, except reflected natural light. I light in a ball to allow my subjects freedom to move about. The poses people make are usually more interesting than poses you tell them to make.

PERFECT *partner*

Nikon Speedlight SB600

Natural light sometimes needs a little help, so a decent flashgun is useful. Bounce it off a wall for soft illumination. Outside, use it as a fill light, either direct, bounced or fired through a diffuser.

The SB600 features Nikon's latest i-TTL monitor pre flash metering, with fully automatic exposure. Part of the Nikon Creative Lighting System, it features a backlit LCD panel, a Guide Number of 30/98 [ISO100,m/ft @ 35mm] and auto zoom coverage from 24 to 85mm.

SPORTS *photography*

Mirror photographer Chris Turvey reveals how his **Nikon D2Hs** allows him to keep one step ahead of the action

Digital photography has revolutionised the workflow of any snapper whose job it is to supply images to the press. Armed with Nikon D2Hs D-SLRs, Chris Turvey, a veteran of 20 years of sports photography, claims his job is now a lot easier. 'Moving files around remotely is a lot easier than sifting through drawers and drawers of negs,' he says.

Chris recently moved up from the D2H to the D2Hs which, he reckons, has improved noise levels, allowing him to shoot evening football matches at his favoured setting of ISO800, or ISO1000 at a push. 'Noise in the D2Hs is imperceptible at those levels. If you play around and test all the settings, you can come up with very acceptable results.'

Chris says his choice of the 8fps D2Hs over, say, the D2X, is purely down to speed. 'I sit next to people who have their finger on the shutter button and blaze away; there's no skill in that. I prefer to pick and choose my shots.'

Working freelance, Chris has a contract to supply sports photography to the Mirror newspaper, as well as a major commercial client. He shoots fine quality JPEG for the paper – commercial demands, however, insist on unadulterated RAW. 'The file sizes are perfect from RAW – around 23MB – which is ideal for advertising work. But when I'm shooting night football and transferring shots to the paper every ten minutes, with no time to edit or process, JPEG is better.'

In terms of lenses, since Chris could be quite a distance from the core action he favours a 400mm f2.8 lens, a 300mm f2.8 and a 70-200mm. To avoid image blur he also uses a monopod – a tripod being too time consuming to set up, not to mention too restricting if he's trekking around a golf course.

Unusually, Chris admits to heavily editing shots in-camera when he has time, 'so on those occasions when I have a technician beside me – whose job it is to send my shots down the line to the paper – he doesn't have to trawl through tons of images.' You're not frightened to miss a key moment while you're looking at the LCD? 'I'm just very careful,' he smiles. 'If it's a hectic match or event I don't. But I have missed pictures and been very annoyed. It comes with experience.'

Although most of the Mirror's focus is on football, Chris covers a wide range of sports – which has taken him abroad for the likes of the Athens Olympics, and championship golf in the States. 'Working for newspapers I try to shoot as tight as possible,' he reveals of his technique. 'But with the quality of cameras now, many people will just shoot loose and pull things up. There's no real skill in that, and you're only using half the image. Find a happy medium.'

Positioning himself correctly is also crucial to Chris. 'You've got to do your homework,' he advises. 'Try to get as much information about the competitors as you can. When you get pitch, or poolside, you need a fair idea of what's going on – particularly working for a newspaper.'

Generally Chris says he likes to work behind or to the side of the goal. 'It's a lot easier to work with play coming towards you rather than across you. If you're on a 400mm lens and the players are on the halfway line and play the ball down the field – you've got to quickly change lenses. That's easier to do with the ball coming towards you.'

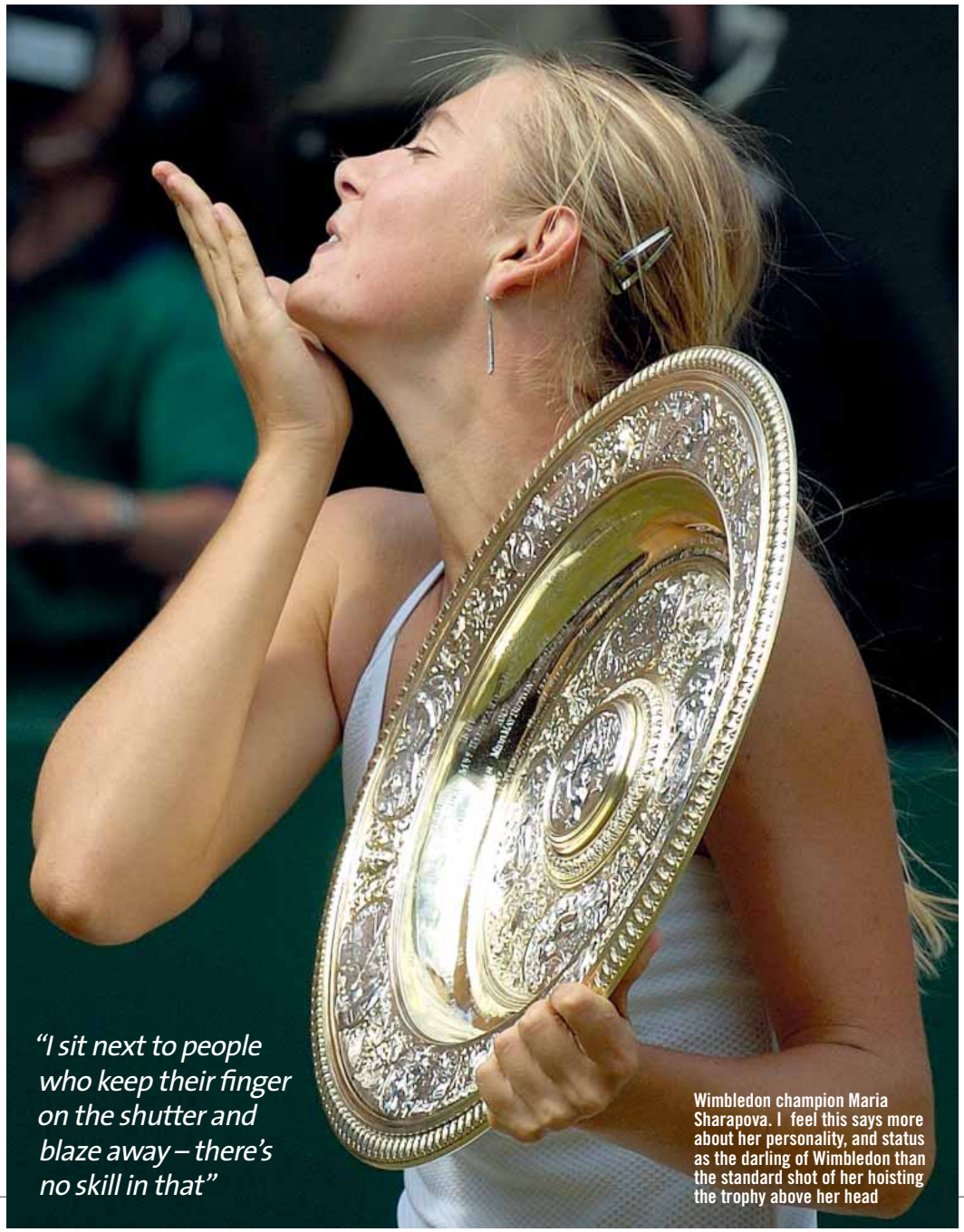
CHRIS'S *kit*

Chris shoots on a Nikon D2Hs with 400mm f2.8, 300mm f2.8 and 70-200mm lenses, storing images on 1GB CompactFlash cards.

Leyton Hewitt at Wimbledon, 2003. This was a burst of two frames at full frame – with him things happen so quickly because he's an expressive, emotional player. He won an important point in a close game and just turned towards the players' box and leapt

This is Antonio Reyes at Highbury in pouring rain. The light had just dropped and the sky turned black, but I was very happy with the quality I got by shooting RAW in those conditions

Alec Stewart in the dressing room, using a 28mm lens. This is one of my favourite shots because it's so atmospheric



"I sit next to people who keep their finger on the shutter and blaze away – there's no skill in that"

Wimbledon champion Maria Sharapova. I feel this says more about her personality, and status as the darling of Wimbledon than the standard shot of her hoisting the trophy above her head

TOP *tips*

Chris Turvey's top tips for sports photography:

1 Do your homework on the sport and players. Get to know the course and the event, so when you turn up you hit the ground running.

2 That said – it's also worth sitting and observing for a little while before taking a shot. You might more easily see a competitor doing something photogenic if you haven't got your camera to your eye.

3 Don't run with the crowd. If you see loads of photographers standing on one corner, go somewhere else. Look for yourself and try to get a different perspective.

4 Experiment with settings and techniques. Never use auto white balance. With night football, the colour temperature of floodlights varies tremendously between grounds, so I set the WB manually.

5 Don't rely too much on big telephotos. A long lens shot at the peak of the action can be dramatic, but there are other, quieter moments during the match to be had. The 300mm and 400mm lenses are over-used in sports photography.

PERFECT *partner*

70-200 f/2.8G AF-S VR IF-ED zoom lens

A good zoom is essential for sports photography. This one covers a useful 105-300mm (equiv) range, so you can fill the frame with your subject or pull back for more of the setting. The fast f2.8 lens enables you to shoot at faster shutter speeds or in lower light conditions.

NATURE *photography*

Keen enthusiast **Donna Albers** gets up close and personal to nature using her trusty **Nikon D100** DSLR

Housewife Donna Albers got into photography as a hobby via her own black & white darkroom, 'taking snapshots' for a long time, but finding it hard to maintain her interest and simultaneously raise a family. 'Then digital came along,' she smiles, 'and Photoshop replaced the darkroom.' Three years ago she bought a compact digital camera, but within a short while this was replaced with the manual control offered by a Nikon D100.

'I feel I have such an easy tool in the Nikon D100 that it allows me to really look for line and form and texture in my nature photography. You can check exposure straight away,' she says. 'Often if I can't get as close as I'd like, I'll take a distance shot; but that's one of the advantages of digital – shooting a lot. I use a 1GB card so I can get a lot of shots. I also shoot quite fast: I don't spend hours or days waiting for animals; it's not my style I guess.

Armed with a digital SLR, Donna's volunteer work at a local nature reserve, with its fascinating flora and fauna, presents her with plenty of photo opportunities. Along with her D100, Donna favours a 24-85mm telephoto lens and 'a lightweight and inexpensive' 70-300mm, but is looking to trade these in for a fixed focal length. 'I don't think the zoom is that important, because I shoot at 300mm most of the time when photographing animals anyway,' she reasons.

That said, Donna has also invested in a 105mm f2.8 Nikon macro lens and a monopod, because in the field tripods can prove too cumbersome. 'A micro lens really helps for close ups. If you want to fill the frame with your subject – a dragonfly for example – you get much finer detail.' Donna finds that a big problem with nature photography is trying to avoid cluttered backgrounds.

'The Nikon D100 has dynamic focusing – I practically always use that for my nature shots as animals don't stay still, plus there's a continuous mode, so I try and use those to capture moving subjects. I don't use auto focus because I realise the depth of field is usually too shallow for me – and I just lose too much of my subject and lose too much control. I select aperture priority if I can, but if it's dark or I really need the speed, I go for shutter priority.'

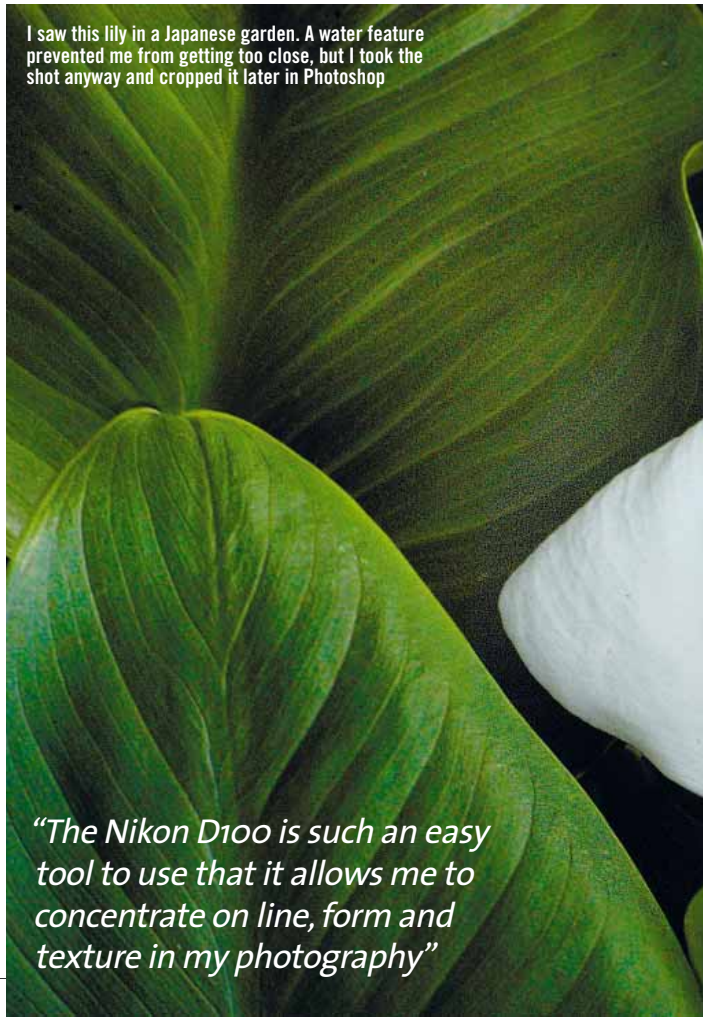
Because of the size of the files and the need to shoot quickly when presented with nature in the raw, Donna opts for shooting high-quality JPEGs as opposed to RAW files, and processes them in Photoshop Elements 2.

'The thing that's helped my photography the most has been getting feedback on [enthusiast community website] www.photo.net – that's how I learned: by looking at so many thousands of photographs,' she says of her post-processing techniques. 'You want to clean up your pictures and your backgrounds so there's no ambiguity.'

'Nature photography has made me look much more at things and change my perspective,' she adds. 'Having the camera made a big difference. I now find photography fresh and interesting. I never thought I'd be a nature photographer – the D100 has helped me discover a new side of myself I never knew existed.'

For more of Donna's dazzling nature images, direct your browser to: www.photo.net/photos/donna_albers

I like detail – I'm drawn to colour and form – and find that flowers and nature provide a lot of complexity



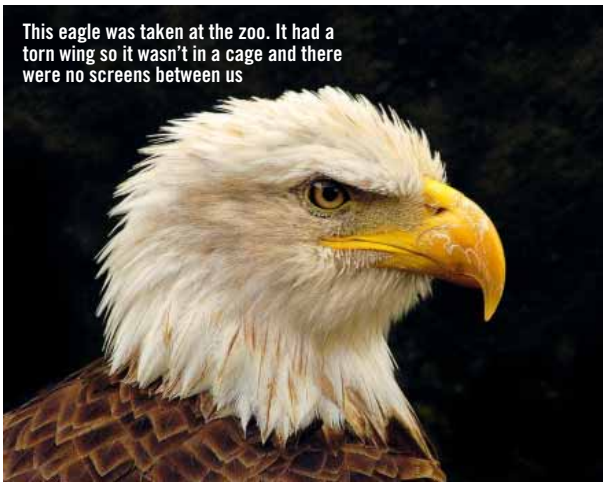
I saw this lily in a Japanese garden. A water feature prevented me from getting too close, but I took the shot anyway and cropped it later in Photoshop

"The Nikon D100 is such an easy tool to use that it allows me to concentrate on line, form and texture in my photography"

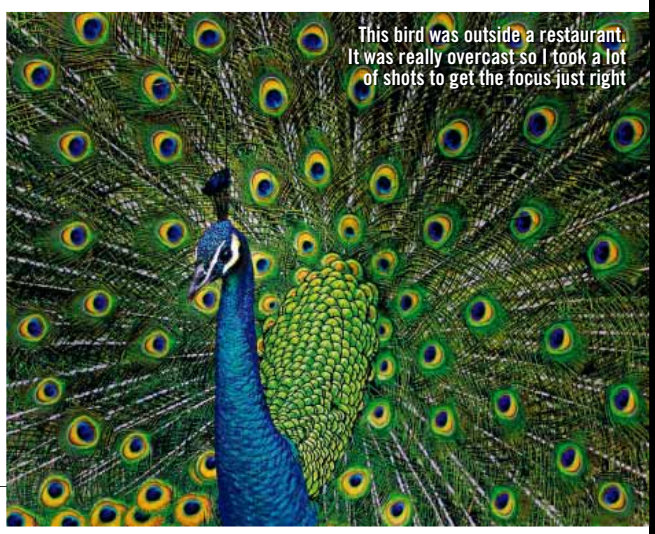
DONNA'S *kit*

Donna shoots on Nikon D100 with 1GB memory plus 24-85mm telephoto, 70-300mm, and 105mm f2.8 Nikon macro lenses. She also employs a Nikon SB800 Speedlight for times when natural lighting is harsh and fill flash is required.

Dragonflies are always a challenge to photograph. This one landed on a pot plant in my back yard. The background was cluttered so I obscured the mess with a blue piece of fabric – hoping to make it look like the sky – and dutifully the dragonfly came back



This eagle was taken at the zoo. It had a torn wing so it wasn't in a cage and there were no screens between us



This bird was outside a restaurant. It was really overcast so I took a lot of shots to get the focus just right

TOP *tips*

Donna Albers's top tips for nature photography:

1 I try to avoid the midday sun for shooting. This helps eliminate harsh shadows.

2 If I'm not using a monopod, I try to brace myself against a railing or a tree, or sometimes I sit down for extra stability. This can be tricky since sometimes I get attacked by fire ants!

3 When hiking, I always carry a backpack with all my lenses, an extra set of charged batteries, another memory card and a top-mounted flash with me.

4 When photographing birds, I try to get the catch-light in the eye, by either shooting early or late in the day or by using a fill flash at minus 2 or 3 f stops.

5 For flower photography, I try a variety of lenses and walk around my subject looking for different angles and perspective. Sometimes I shoot on a bended knee.

PERFECT *partner*

60 F/2.8D AF MICRO-NIKKOR lens

No nature photographer should be without a macro lens for 1:1 life-size studies of plants, insects and so forth. Nikon produces three 1:1 macro lenses, including a 105mm and 200mm, but this is Nikon's most compact and affordable model. Nikon's close range correction (CRC) system provides high optical performance at both near and far focusing distances.

TRAVEL *photography*

Enthusiast **Manuel Librodo Jr.** explains why he always packs a **Nikon D70** on his world travels

Originally from the Philippines, the long school holidays have proved a real boon for teacher and photo enthusiast Manuel Librodo Jr.

'I chose the Nikon D70, having had the Coolpix 4500 before and liked the colours it provided,' he says. 'After searching through the internet and asking friends, I decided that if I wanted to upgrade I might as well choose another Nikon. I felt I needed the power of a DSLR to improve my pictures.'

Manuel believes that the true essence of any travel photography is to not only capture the place but also the culture. 'And one of the main essences of an exotic culture is the colours,' he adds. 'The Nikon D70 allows me to get the optimum colours I want in an image. My first purchase was a 24-85mm f4.5-5.6 lens but I also have a 70-200mm f2.8 lens and, for portraits, a 50mm f1.8. I also use a 60mm f2.8 macro.'

Despite travelling a lot, Manuel only started shooting seriously about three years ago. 'In the past I was mainly travelling around Europe – and places such as Morocco, Greece and Prague – but I wasn't able to capture the essence of the places. I now take time to go and shoot abroad. Thailand is also a beautiful place, with a lot of things to photograph.'

For any travelogue photography, not only finding the right place but also shooting at the right time of day to get optimum natural lighting conditions, is very important. 'The best time for taking travel photos for me is at the end of the day and early morning,' he reveals. 'I never use flash, so I have to do my pictures when there's light. I don't like harsh light either.'

The D70 also helps out here and, claims Manuel, is 'very good at capturing the correct exposure. I think, because I like capturing different cultures, the ideal travel photograph for me would be a picture with a person in it. The face itself tells a lot of stories so I like to zero in on the eyes as much as possible. It doesn't need to be a very tight portrait, but the eyes must be very clear with a little bit of background and colour: that for me would be a perfect travel photograph.'

Manuel usually travels with 3GB of CompactFlash memory, spread across five different cards: two 1GB, one 512MB and two 256MB cards. 'The reason for that is I read somewhere that a 2GB is not advisable because if you lose it you could lose a whole holiday's worth of images,' he ascertains.

As he likes to move around a lot when he shoots, Manuel has eschewed a tripod until now, but is looking to invest in a lightweight option 'because there are certain visual effects you can't achieve without one.'

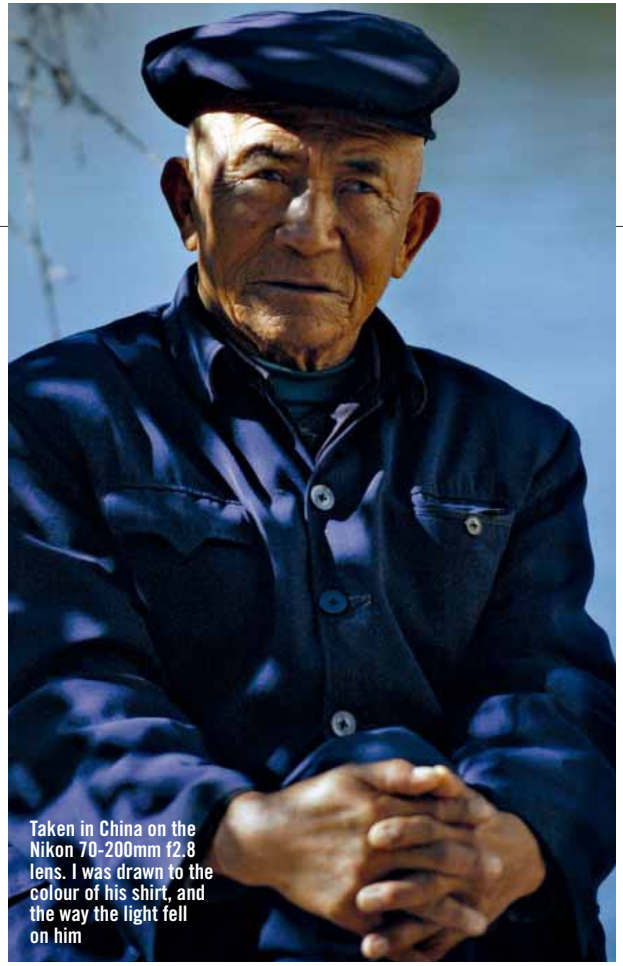
Next for Manuel, who also shoots fashion photography, is a trip to Nepal. The shots from his trip will appear as updates on his online gallery.

'I'm just a hobbyist and far from a professional photographer,' he says modestly, 'but what I see and hear seem to translate well into my photographs. And people seem to appreciate that, so that's good enough for me.'

For more of Manuel's travelogue photography, direct your browser at:
http://pbase.com/manny_librodo

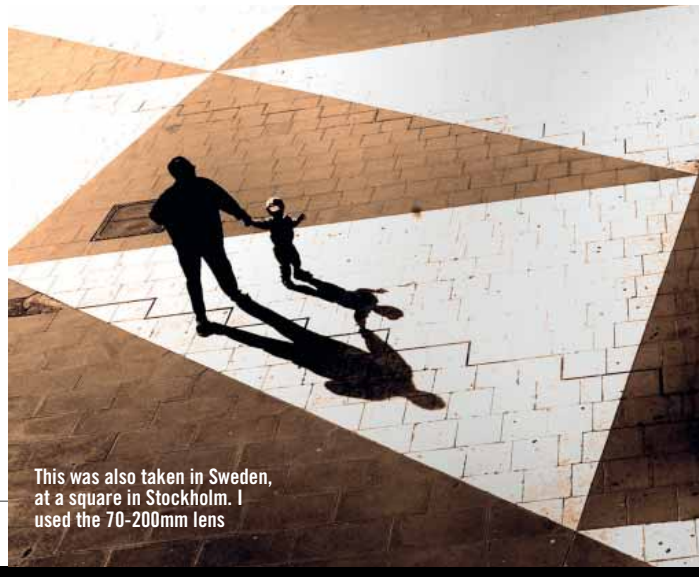
MANUEL'S *kit*

A Nikon D70 DSLR equipped with 70-200 f2.8, 50mm f1.8, 60mm f2.8, and 24-85mm f4.5-5.6 lenses.
He spreads storage of his images across two 1GB, one 512MB and two 256MB CompactFlash cards.



Taken in China on the Nikon 70-200mm f2.8 lens. I was drawn to the colour of his shirt, and the way the light fell on him

Stockholm, Sweden. I used a 12-24mm lens and stood on a bridge to shoot the skyline. The boat added some foreground interest



This was also taken in Sweden, at a square in Stockholm. I used the 70-200mm lens

This portrait was taken in Thailand, using a 50mm lens

"The true essence of any travel photography is to not only capture the place but also the culture"

This candid shot was taken in China, on the 70-200mm lens

TOP *tips*

Manuel Librodo Jr's top tips for travel photography:

1 Your home country may have plenty to offer. I'm partial to my home country the Philippines; there's so much to take pictures of, that I feel guilty for not travelling around it more.

2 Smile at people if you can't speak the language. Eventually they'll smile back at you, so you know that it's OK to take their picture. If it's not OK with them, then it's useless to spend time trying.

3 Go where others don't. It'll give your pictures a different perspective and make them more unique. I was shooting a parade of monks and everyone else automatically started taking pictures in front, so I went behind them to make my own point of view different. Don't go for the obvious.

4 Bring an umbrella. Especially in Asia. If it rains you can use it as a cover for your camera and continue taking pictures.

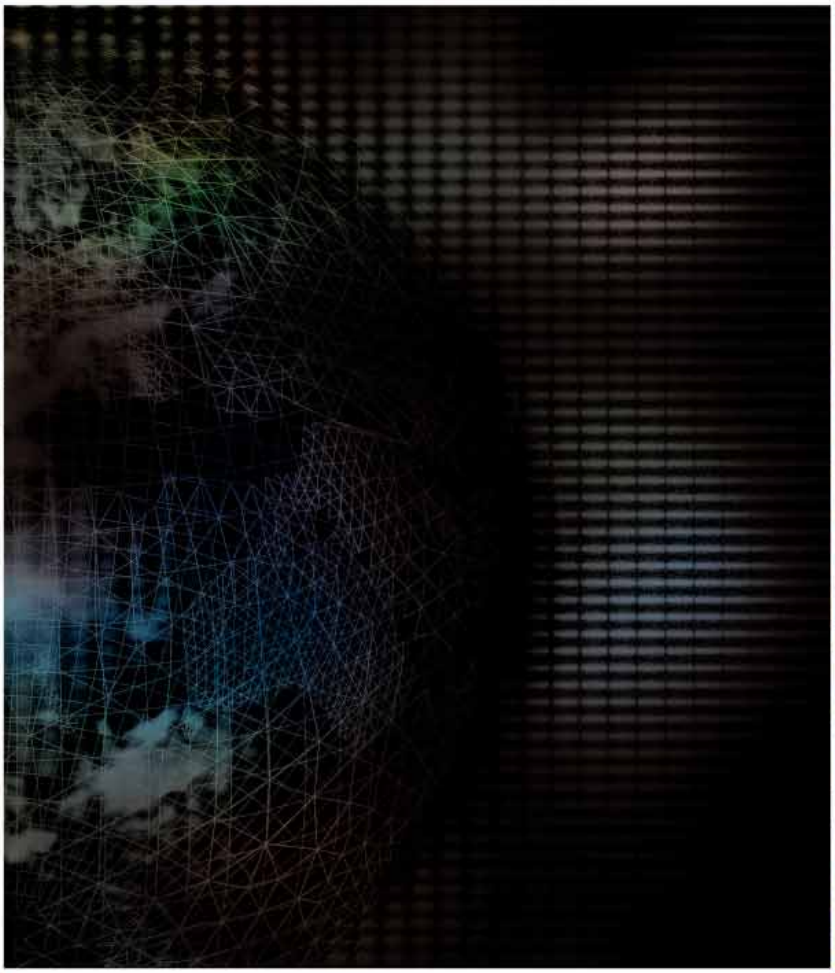
5 Look at postcards of the place you're visiting and ask yourself: 'how could I possibly make this better or even more beautiful?' And try doing it.

PERFECT *partner*

24-85 F/3.5-4.5mm G AFS

Travel photographers need a lens that covers a wide range of the most useful focal lengths, yet isn't too big or heavy. This lens fits the bill perfectly. Featuring ED glass and aspherical lens technology for optimum image quality, the 24-85mm also boasts a Silent Wave Motor for super-fast, super-quiet AF operation.

Nikon
AF-S DX



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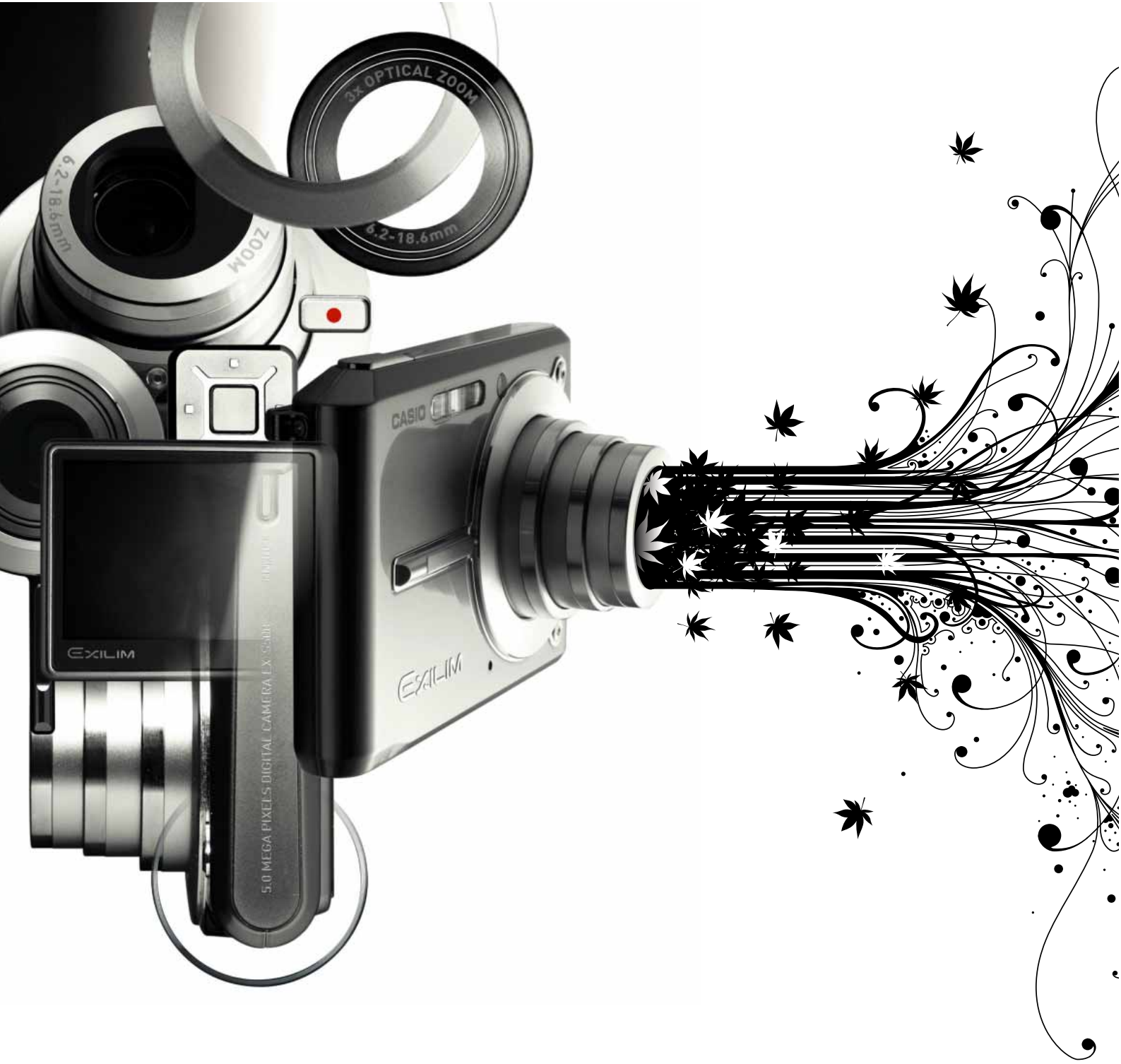

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Model shown: EX-S500. To see more visit www.casiology.com/findit

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CHRISTMAS Buying Guide 2005

Welcome to the **What Digital Camera** Christmas Buying Guide supplement.

If you're thinking of giving someone the gift of photography this year, be sure to read this guide first. We've group tested every kind of camera from the latest camera phones to digital SLRs. Featuring over 30 cameras and phones, from £100 to £600, you're sure to find something to please every taste and pocket.

Nigel Atherton Editor

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CAMERAS UNDER £100 p09

LIFESTYLE CAMERAS p13

SUPERZOOMS p19

DSLRs p25

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PHONE CAMS

If you carry a mobile phone, why not make it one with a camera in it? **Joël Lacey** looks at the choices

If you use a mobile phone, you know that eventually the battery starts failing, the buttons stop working or the screen gets scratched to opacity. Time to upgrade.

And if you are a mobile phone user, it now makes sense to buy one of the newer phone cameras that actually produces images big enough to print. One megapixel gives you, just about, an enprint.

BUYING ADVICE

Unlike the digital camera market, the phone market often makes it possible to buy a feature-packed phone for less than a simple one. Why this perversity? Well the phones are subsidised by the networks, which want you to use as much of the bandwidth that they bought for billions of pounds, and they want you to transmit as many kilobytes as possible, in order that they can make some money. This augurs well for when the four, six and eight-megapixel models start to arrive.

Given that many of these phones now sensibly accept memory cards, it also means you don't actually have to transmit that information – instead you can wait until you get home and either transfer the images or print them direct there.

When choosing a phone you need to check that it can be used on your network, or indeed to check your contract is old enough to port to a new network. If you buy pay as you go, you may well end up paying more for your phone. ►►

FEATURES

MAIN SCREEN
The higher the resolution of the screen, the easier it is to see whether the image the camera phone is capturing will be any good. Composition is, in the absence of a viewfinder, done exclusively with the LCD. Refresh rates on mobile phone camera screens are not always great, so check them out before you buy

PHOTO CONTROLS
As well as a main control array, some phone cameras have a joystick that lets you navigate around the functions. Others will have dedicated buttons for use only with the camera functions or that actually cause the phone to switch to camera mode, which is a lot better than searching in nested menus

MEMORY CARD SLOT
As camera phone resolution increases, it becomes more important that there is some means of easily copying and retrieving the images. Those mobiles that do come with memory cards normally use one of the reduced-size memory cards, which come with an adaptor so it can easily be transferred into either a SD/MMC slot or a MemoryStick slot on a card reader

LENS AND 'FLASH'
Some models have lenses that are not fixed in the body of the phone but are separate units. It obviously makes sense for the flash to be housed in the same unit so that it is always available to illuminate the subject that the lens is pointing at

BLUETOOTH ADAPTOR FOR THE PC
Transfer images (albeit at a pace that makes USB 1.1 look like warp factor 10) wirelessly to your computer. It also allows you to use other Bluetooth accessories and to synchronise your contacts from PC address book to mobile phone and vice-versa

ACCESSORIES

MOBILE PHONE TOOLS SOFTWARE
For those cameras that don't have built-in editing features, you can create your own screensavers with software from some manufacturers using your own pictures

BLUETOOTH PHOTO PRINTER
Print pictures directly from the camera with a Bluetooth printer

MOTOROLA V635

FREE ►£140

This clamshell design of phone has a 1.2-megapixel camera built in. It's speedy to start up and the camera side of things is as simple as can be. Results are as one might expect given the fixed shutter speed, focus and aperture of the set-up, but there is also a small degree of distortion present in the final images. Exposures are surprisingly good and the V635 is capable of capturing fine detail. High contrast white-out and image artefacts are worse in low light levels. The V635 proved capable of resolving fine detail. I shot a vegetable bed, and the colours and contrast were handled pretty well, but the lens showed some distortion on the nearer subjects in the foreground.

SPECIFICATIONS

RESOLUTION 1.2 megapixel
FOCUS Fixed
EXPOSURE Automatic
BUILT-IN MEMORY 5Mb
ADDITIONAL MEMORY TransFlash card
BLUETOOTH Yes
BAND QuadBand
WEIGHT 125g
IRDA No
SCREEN RESOLUTION 256,000pixels (main) 4,096 (front)
GRPS Yes
COST FREE->£140

SCORES		
Features	15	TOTAL
Ease of use	17	
Image Quality	12	78%
Design	17	
Value	17	

NOKIA N90

FREE ►£500

Newest of the camera phones in this round-up, the N90 is a 2MP autofocusing camera. Unlike the Sony Ericsson it has a swivelling separate lens assembly, and the camera part of the phone is activated by swivelling the viewing screen though 90°. There is a zoom of kinds on the camera, but it is the dreaded digital variety, so the more you zoom the smaller the image. The phone itself has an enormous number of features and this makes it a bit slow when starting up and also when moving between modes. Picture quality is evidently better than those models with half its resolution. The 'flash' LED is a bit under-powered in backlighting situations, but works very well up to a couple of metres in dark shots. The camera is significantly thicker/bigger than all the others here (except the Sagem), but certainly isn't as easy to lose in a pair of combat trousers!

SPECIFICATIONS

RESOLUTION 2 megapixel
FOCUS Autofocus
EXPOSURE Scene settings including Scenery, Portrait, Night and Sports
BUILT-IN MEMORY 31Mb
ADDITIONAL MEMORY MiniMMC
BLUETOOTH Yes
BAND Dual mode WCDMA/GSM and triband GSM
WEIGHT 173g
IRDA No
SCREEN RESOLUTION 16,384 pixels(front) 262,144pixels (Main)
GRPS Yes
COST FREE->£500

SCORES		
Features	18	TOTAL
Ease of use	15	
Image Quality	15	80%
Design	15	
Value	17	

SAGEM MYX8

FREE ►£300

The Sagem MyX8 has the longest start-up time of the models shown here. We also found that the shutter release button required too much pressure to take a picture, resulting in some unwanted camera movement and thus a blurring of the resolving ability of the lens and chip. The general controls were rather more style than substance and despite being the longest phone, this had the smallest control buttons.

Image quality is OK in resolving terms but colours are not always naturally rendered. The MyX8's images show generally excellent exposures but this is somewhat undone by muted and sometimes artificial colours. The lens cannot cope with close-ups, but more distant shots, when the camera was firmly held, are certainly more than acceptable.

SPECIFICATIONS

RESOLUTION 1.2 megapixel
FOCUS Fixed
EXPOSURE Automatic
BUILT-IN MEMORY 40Mb
ADDITIONAL MEMORY MiniSD card
BLUETOOTH Yes
BAND TriBand
WEIGHT 125g
IRDA YES
SCREEN RESOLUTION 256,000pixels (main) 4,096 (front)
GRPS Yes
COST FREE->£300

SCORES		
Features	15	TOTAL
Ease of use	16	
Image Quality	11	75%
Design	17	
Value	16	

SAMSUNG E720

FREE ►£180

The Samsung is one of the best-looking models here and also was the one that most people I showed it to found easiest to navigate. In photographic terms its colour rendition in bright lighting was very good, but there was a lot of noise on indoor shots. Despite this being the lowest resolution of all the models on test, there was no obvious difference in sheer resolving power on the 6x4in prints, although it proved one of the harder phones to hold absolutely steady.

Very quick start-up time and general ease of use add to the appeal as a phone, but despite 88MB memory it lacks a little as a camera. Low-ish resolution does the E720 no great favours, but in one of my test shots of a rose, the lens's depth of field and the sensor's dynamic range are both quite able to handle the rose's closeness and its brilliance in the afternoon sun.

SPECIFICATIONS

RESOLUTION 1 megapixel
FOCUS Fixed
EXPOSURE Automatic
BUILT-IN MEMORY 88Mb
ADDITIONAL MEMORY No
BLUETOOTH Yes
BAND TriBand
WEIGHT 90g
IRDA No
SCREEN RESOLUTION 256,000pixels (main) 65,536 (front)
GRPS Yes
COST FREE->£180

SCORES		
Features	15	TOTAL
Ease of use	18	
Image Quality	11	78%
Design	17	
Value	17	

SIEMENS SF65

FREE ►£100

The Siemens SF65 is a very clever design in a physical sense, as the screen swivels to make a very camera-like shape. Swivelling the screen puts you in camera mode too, which is another nice touch. While you can connect the phone via USB (Windows) and there is an infrared port, there is no memory card facility and no Bluetooth connection, which can make downloading a slow process. Many people commented on the iPod-like design, and the photo performance is not bad at all.

On balance, though, the SF65 is not quite there yet. There is good colour rendition, though on some shots the shutter button's stiffness caused some rotational camera movement. Internal shots in low-light are as noisy, and the flash, as with many camera phones, does not really add enough light to make a difference.

SPECIFICATIONS

RESOLUTION 1.3 megapixel
FOCUS Fixed
EXPOSURE Automatic
BUILT-IN MEMORY 20Mb
ADDITIONAL MEMORY No
BLUETOOTH No
BAND DualBand
WEIGHT 100g
IRDA Yes
SCREEN RESOLUTION 65,536,000pixels
GRPS Yes
COST FREE->£100

SCORES		
Features	14	TOTAL
Ease of use	17	
Image Quality	13	78%
Design	17	
Value	17	

SONY ERICSSON K750i

FREE ►£250

Sony Ericsson's K750i was the most camera-like of the phones on offer – it focuses for a start. In addition, its image processing seems more assured than the other phones, although this may be more to do with the fact there was more of an image (2 megapixels) to process.

It's an easy phone to use, as the opening of the lens cover activates the camera. Image quality isn't perfect, but it is as close to perfection as you can get with the current crop of mobile phone camera models. In short, this is a good camera. In my test shot of a rose, the K750i not only managed to focus on the rose, it was sophisticated enough to show the subtlety of tone between those petals in full light and those in partial shade. The camera's only flaw is the stiffness in the shutter release button leading to some involuntary camera movement.

SPECIFICATIONS

RESOLUTION 2 megapixels
FOCUS Autofocus, macro
EXPOSURE Automatic
BUILT-IN MEMORY 38Mb
ADDITIONAL MEMORY MemoryStick Duo
BLUETOOTH Yes
BAND TriBand
WEIGHT 100g
IRDA Yes
SCREEN RESOLUTION 262,000pixels
GRPS Yes
COST FREE->£250

SCORES		
Features	18	TOTAL
Ease of use	16	
Image Quality	15	82%
Design	16	
Value	17	

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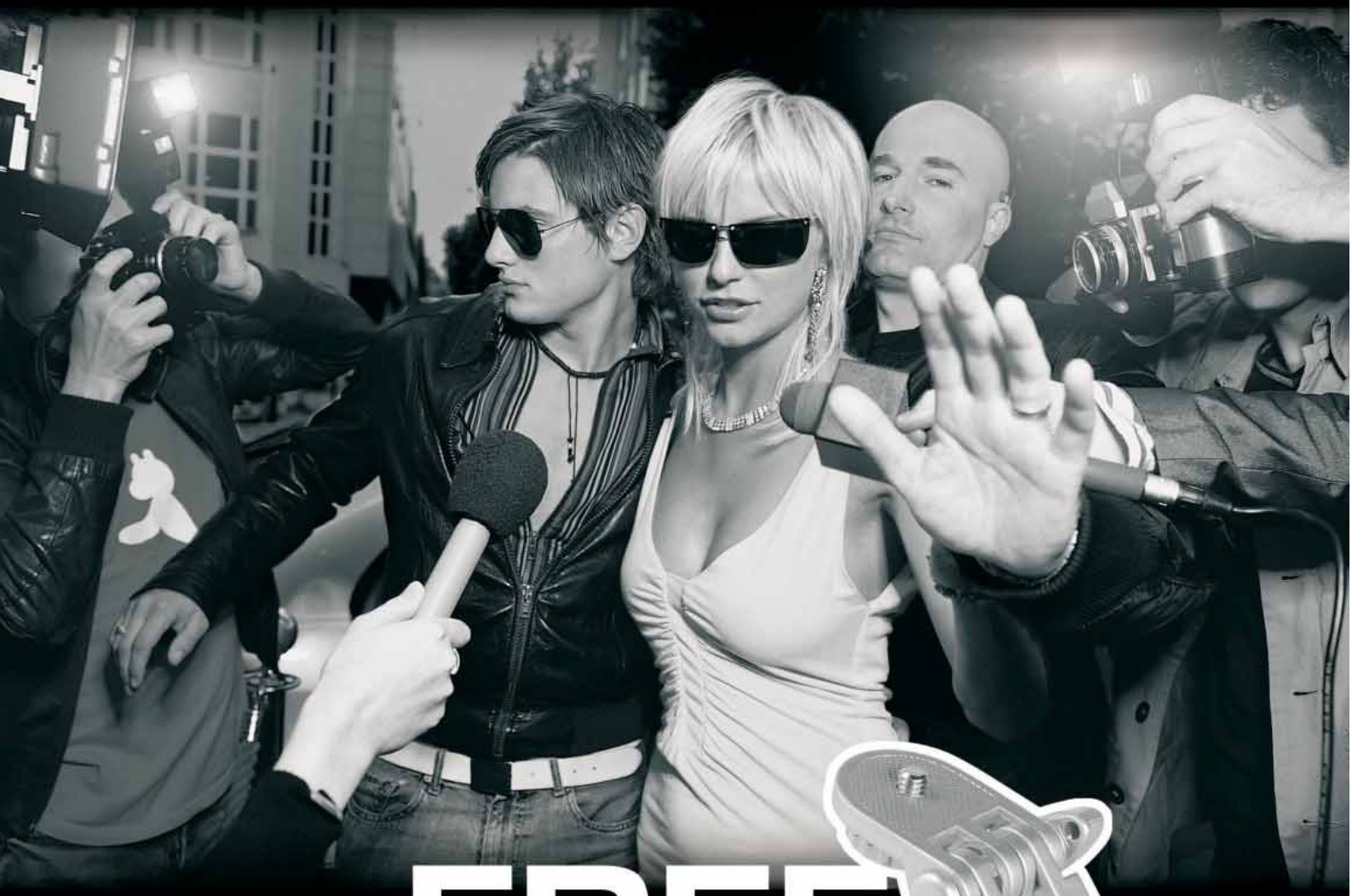

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WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA

CAMERAS UNDER £100

Hannah Bouckley finds out what camera is the best if you're on a budget

Digital cameras can be expensive and – despite the steady decline in price over the past couple of years – not everyone can afford to spend hundreds of pounds on a camera, especially if it is only being used occasionally for holidays and birthdays.

Cameras at this sub-£100 price are great for beginners, or anyone who is thinking about getting into digital photography and wants to invest in a basic camera to find out if they like it, before spending more money. They're also ideal Christmas presents for children, as a means of introducing them to a rewarding and inexpensive new hobby.

BUYING ADVICE

Before you invest in a camera you need to think about what you want it to do. Our criteria for selecting the models in this round-up is a 3x optical zoom and a minimum resolution of 3MP, which is suitable for 10x8in prints at 200dpi. With a price point of under £100 you are not going to get the most stylish camera on the market, however there are other factors that are more important. How comfortable is the camera to hold? How durable is the build quality? Does it offer a wide selection of scene modes

To help you make a decision we looked at five budget cameras in turn, assessing these factors, along with speed and performance. In order to test the picture quality we took a selection of photographs including macro, wideangle and telephoto shots, using the same settings for each camera, before comparing and contrasting the results to see which were the most pleasing and accurate.

The price suggested by the manufacturer may be slightly higher, however our prices are based on the average street price, which is the typical price you can expect to pay on the high street or Internet. ►►

FEATURES

Budget compacts are often aimed at newcomers to digital photography, with the emphasis on ease of use. Exposure modes usually include auto or program, plus a selection of scene modes, such as Landscape, Portrait and Night scene, optimised for different shooting conditions. Any manual features will be limited to exposure compensation, white balance and ISO. Most budget cameras include a basic movie mode.

BUILD QUALITY & DESIGN

At the cheaper end of the digital compact market, cameras will typically be built out of plastic; a metal body costs more to make and will increase the price. The camera should, however, be durable and able to withstand day-to-day wear and tear.

If you are spending £100 or under on a camera, it is unlikely that you are going to get a high-fashion model: the design is usually solid and rectangular, without the ultra-slim exterior and folded optics found in lifestyle cameras.

POWER

Typically, sub-£100 digital cameras are powered using two AA batteries and are supplied with disposables. Lithium-ion cells last longer but are more expensive to make (and consequently buy), which is why manufacturers tend to use them in their higher-priced models, or in cameras that are too small for AAs.

The advantage of AAs is that they are widely available, ensuring that if your battery runs flat on holiday you should be able to find replacements easily. Avoid using standard AA cells because if you use the camera a lot, particularly the zoom, they will soon run flat; instead opt for Alkaline cells that last longer, or ideally a set of rechargeable cells and a charger.

LCD

The LCD size is an important consideration. Not only will you be using it to compose most of your photos, but you will also be using it to view the menu settings. In the past couple of years the size of LCDs have got bigger; 1.8ins and 2ins are now practically standard. If you have problems with your eyesight, find out if you can read the text on the screen before you buy the camera, as the writing used in menus can be very small.

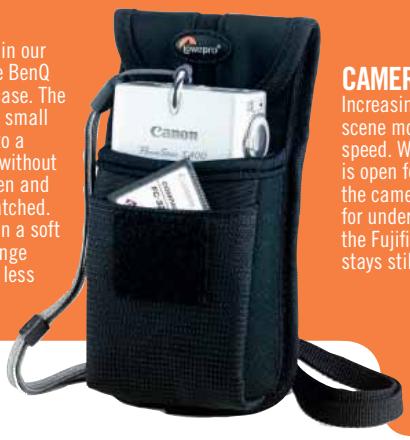
LENS

Many cameras at this budget have fixed-focus lenses, which are often cheaper. However, if you can splash out a little more money to get an optical zoom, then do. It will offer you more creativity; enabling you to photograph far-off objects, and by zooming in or out you can remove unwanted objects from the picture. At this budget most cameras include 3x optical zooms with a typical focal length of around 35-105mm. For wideangle or telephoto capability you will need to spend more money.

ACCESSORIES

CAMERA POUCH

Out of the five cameras in our round up, only one – the BenQ – was supplied with a case. The majority of cameras are small enough to easily slip into a bag or pocket, however without protection the LCD screen and body can easily get scratched. Avoid this by investing in a soft case. There is a wide range available, often costing less than £10.



CAMERA SUPPORT OR MINI TRIPOD

Increasing numbers of cameras feature night scene modes which employ a long shutter speed. When you use these modes the shutter is open for a longer duration than normal, so the camera is more prone to shake. Available for under £5, a mini tripod or support such as the Fujifilm Camcushion will ensure the camera stays still, thus avoiding camera shake.

NECK STRAP

Most digital cameras are supplied with a wrist strap. However, if you are on holiday or out and about with your camera you will want to keep both hands free. Invest in a thin strap and you can hang the camera around your neck, ready to grab at a moment's notice.

ACER CE-5330 £95

The CE-5530 has a 2in LCD and an optical viewfinder. Unfortunately the lightweight plastic body looks scratch prone and doesn't feel particularly durable. Navigate the menus using the four-way button, which controls the flash and self-timer, though the macro is buried in the menu. However, the white menu text can be tricky to read depending on the background of your scene. The four scene modes are joined by auto exposure and Program, in which adjustments can be made to exposure compensation, metering, ISO and white balance. The three-second start-up time won't beat any records, but the autofocus performs well at wideangle, slowing slightly at telephoto.

Many images are underexposed and display a blue cast. Of our five cameras this displayed the strongest purple fringing in high-contrast scenes and auto mode doesn't cope well with noise. Macro mode is impressive, with accurate colour and detail.

SPECIFICATIONS

CCD
1/2.5" 5.18MP total
LENS
32-96mm f/2.8-4.8
SHUTTER SPEEDS
1/2 – 1/1000 sec
ISO
50, 100, 200
EXPOSURE MODES
Auto, P, 5 scene
FLASH
4 selectable modes
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR
n/a /2-inch, 130,000 pixels
OTHER
12Mb int, SD, 6cm macro, 320x240 movies
POWER
2x AA
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
91 x 61 x 27mm/130g

SCORES	
Features	14
Ease of use	17
Image Quality	15
Design	16
Value	18

TOTAL 80%

BENQ DC C420 £90

Capable of producing pictures 11.4 x 8.5in at 200dpi, the BenQ is very lightweight and fits easily into a pocket. It feels fairly durable, though the rubber flap concealing the USB connection is flimsy. Choose between auto, program and four scene modes. The menu changes in relation to the scene, though the text is white, making it hard to see clearly. Use the square navigation button to adjust the flash and self-timer. Unfortunately the macro command is in the menu, not a dedicated button. Users can make some manual adjustments, selecting from five preset white balance settings (and auto), ISOs of 50, 100 and 200, and average and spot metering. Start-up is around three seconds, not particularly quick. The noisy autofocus system utilises one central point and, while quick at wideangle, struggles at telephoto. Results are consistently underexposed, though sharp, and the BenQ copes reasonably well with tricky exposures, displaying slight fringing in high-contrast scenes.

SPECIFICATIONS

CCD
4.0MP effective
LENS
32-96mm f/2.8-4.8
SHUTTER SPEEDS
1/2 sec – 1/1000 sec
ISO
A, 50, 100, 200
EXPOSURE MODES
Auto, P, 5 scene
FLASH
0.5-2m
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR
n/a/ 1.8-inch, 130,000 pixels
OTHER
12Mb, SD, 6cm macro, 320 x 240 movies
POWER
2x AA
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
91 x 61 x 27mm/130g

SCORES	
Features	14
Ease of use	18
Image Quality	16
Design	16
Value	18

TOTAL 82%

OLYMPUS C-370 £95

This chunky little Olympus fits neatly into your hand, the thumb easily reaches the mode dial, zoom control, 4-way controller and record and playback buttons. The 3x optical zoom isn't as responsive as some of the other cameras here and is a bit too high to be used comfortably. There are 4 scene modes, and the only manual adjustment possible is exposure compensation.

At just under three seconds the start-up time doesn't impress; the shutter isn't very responsive and in playback mode it takes about 2.5secs to scroll between images. The focusing system is limited to one central point, and despite not being particularly fast, is quiet. The 1.5in LCD, though small, works well in bright sun. In tricky light conditions, images are decent, if under-exposing slightly, and colours tend to be a little warm. Results in Super Macro Mode are excellent.

SPECIFICATIONS

CCD
1/2.7" 3.2MP effective, 3.34MP total
LENS
38-114mm, f/2.9-5.0
SHUTTER SPEEDS
2-1/2000 sec
ISO
A (64-250)
EXPOSURE MODES
P, 4 scene
FLASH
0.2m – 3.8m (W)/ 0.5m – 2.2m (T)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR
n/a/1.5-inch, 130,000 pixels
OTHER
xD, 2cm macro, 320x240 movie
POWER
2x AA
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
87.5 x 62.5 x 38.5mm/140g

SCORES	
Features	13
Ease of use	18
Image Quality	16
Design	17
Value	18

TOTAL 82%

FUJIFILM A345 £100

The A345 is well-built camera, comfortable to hold and most user-friendly. All the buttons are in easy reach and perform one function. You slide a switch to swap between playback, movie and record modes. Operate the 3x zoom by pulling a lever up and down using your thumb, a control you also use for menu navigation. When you turn the camera on, it takes about 3.5secs before you can take a picture. Utilising a central point, focusing is fairly quick at wideangle, slowing a little at telephoto. The menu text is very clear, but tricky to see in brightness, though happily there is a manual viewfinder. Adjustments can only be made to seven pre-set white balance modes and exposure compensation, though there are four scene modes. Images are sharp and detailed, but in low light, colours can be oversaturated. Camera shake can also be a problem.

SPECIFICATIONS

CCD
1/2.5" 4.1MP effective
LENS
35-105mm f/2.8-4.7
SHUTTER SPEEDS
2-1/2000 sec
ISO
A (64-400)
EXPOSURE MODES
Auto, M, 4 scene modes
FLASH
0.6-3.5m (W)/ 0.6-3m (T)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR
Real-image optical/1.7-inch, 115,000 pixels
OTHER
xD, 6cm macro, 320x240 movies
POWER
2x AA
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
90 x 60 x 30.3mm/132g

SCORES	
Features	13
Ease of use	18
Image Quality	17
Design	18
Value	18

TOTAL 84%

CANON A410 £100

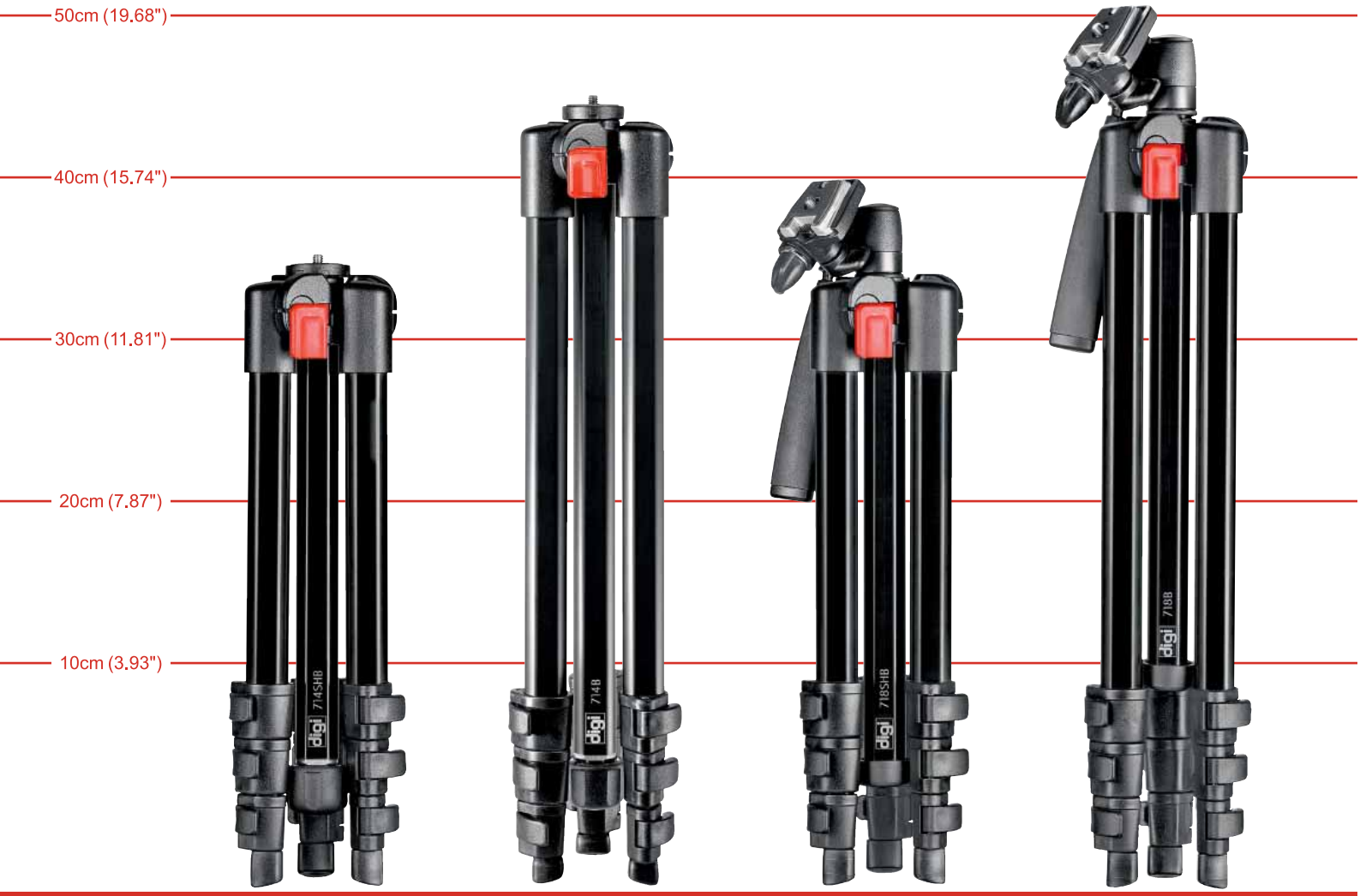
A well-built camera, this is fairly comfortable to use. The lens is the most versatile in the line-up; you operate the zoom with the up and down arrows on the four-way controller. Adjust set-up options through the menu, though due to the small (1.5in) LCD, text can be hard to read. The Canon has a decent feature-set; along with eight scene modes there's exposure compensation, ISO settings of 50, 100 and 200, seven white balance options (including manual) and colour effects including low sharpening and b&w. At less than two seconds, start-up is impressive, but battery life seems less so. Focusing is quick and accurate. Choose a centrally weighted focus point or use Canon's 5-point AiAF system, and an AF assist lamp helps out in low-light. Results are accurate even in low light, but in trickier light and dark exposures, highlights can sometimes blow out, and at wideangle, edges can be soft.

SPECIFICATIONS

CCD
1/3.2" 3.2MP effective, 3.3MP total
LENS
41-131mm f/2.8-5.1
SHUTTER SPEEDS
1-1/2000 sec
ISO
50, 100, 200
EXPOSURE MODES
Auto, M, 8 scene, panorama
FLASH
47cm – 3m (W) / 47cm - 2m (T)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR
n/a/ 1.5-inch, 120,000 pixels
OTHER
SD/MMC, 1.5cm super macro, 640x480 movies
POWER
2x AA
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
103 x 52.8 x 40.3mm/150g

SCORES	
Features	15
Ease of use	18
Image Quality	17
Design	17
Value	18

TOTAL 85%



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WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA

LIFESTYLE CAMERAS

Does your camera say something about you? Do you want it to be as cool as you are? **Joel Lacey** looks at a selection of cameras for the fashionistas

Digital cameras categorised as 'lifestyle' models are primarily concerned with making you look good while you take your pictures. They're aimed at those who consider style to be at least as important as ability. But that doesn't mean these are the technology equivalents of clothes horses. They are often at the acme of technological achievement with lots and lots of innovation but wrapped up in a gorgeous enough package to do the contents justice.

BUYING ADVICE

We at WDC towers would never be so shallow as to advise you to buy a camera solely on the basis that it looks nice, but it's not beyond reason to buy a nice-looking camera that does the job you want it to do. Within this group of eight models there is something for all tastes. There are two 8MP models and six 5MP choices. None of them is thicker than 33mm, most are well under an inch thick. Because of this fact, it is well worth handling the cameras before buying as there may be handling issues on small or very slim cameras. It's fine to have a camera that looks great but your cool won't be enhanced if you are unable to use it in front of all your mates! Does the camera have all the modes you need? Is there any level of manual control? Just what are the pros and cons of the camera? These questions as well as the performance of the cameras can be established by an examination of the ratings that appear in this round-up, and should be sufficient to give you an idea of what's what. ►►

ZOOM LENS

Some of the cameras in this class have internal zoom lenses. This means they don't have any protruding parts to be knocked out of kilter. It also means the camera doesn't get any bigger when you switch it on.

FEATURES

FUNCTIONS

LCD Monitors: Lifestyle cameras are less likely to have optical viewfinders but will compensate by fitting the biggest screen possible on their backplates.

Button clusters: Big LCD screens mean less room for anything else on the back of the camera. Most models feature a four-way controller with a central OK button, used in tandem with a menu button. The buttons have different uses in capture and play modes to keep the numbers of buttons down.

Flash: One problem with small cameras is small maximum apertures on the lenses. This can make the built-in flashguns a bit underpowered.

PICTBRIDGE PRINTER

All the cameras in this round-up are Pictbridge direct printing compatible so you don't need a PC if you want to get prints in a hurry from them. As well as many A4 inkjets, you can also choose from a plethora of portable enprint printers like the Epson PictureMate 100.

ACCESSORIES

SPARE BATTERY

Although all the cameras in this round-up use Lithium Ion cells (and so a battery charger is already included) it's well worth buying an additional battery if you're going to be out in the field all day, especially if it's looking gloomy and you're going to be using flash quite a bit.

MORE MEMORY

Manufacturers tend to be a bit mean when including memory cards with their cameras. 5MP and 8MP models are obviously quite memory intensive so a 16Mb or even 32Mb card is frankly an emergency-only card. Get yourself a 512Mb or a 1Gb card and you can shoot for as long as your battery lasts…

CANON IXUS i ZOOM £320

The Digital Ixus i has been updated by adding a zoom lens. The predictably named i Zoom has a 38-90mm lens, 5MP resolution and a bijou range of overrides.

Metering can be changed between evaluative, centre-weighted and spot. In 'manual' mode the white balance, self timer, ISO and exposure compensation can also be altered. There are six scene modes and, in macro mode, a minimum focusing distance of 10cm. The camera itself is the smallest on show here being about the size of a 10-pack of fags. Because of this, it has the smallest LCD (1.8inch) but it's a high definition one.

In performance terms this is an effective if not ground-breaking performing camera. It produces nicely exposed, generally excellently focused images and image processing is well handled too. As with all tiny cameras, it's best, if the light permits, to set the ISO to 50 rather than let auto take care of it, because noise levels creep up exponentially with the ISO setting. And it's available in a choice of Black, Cranberry and Sahara (bronze) finishes.

SPECIFICATIONS

CCD
1/2.5-inch 5.5MP CCD, 5.0MP effective
LENS
38-90mm f/3.2-5.4
SHUTTER SPEEDS
15-1/1600 sec
ISO
Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES
Auto, 'manual', 6 scene modes
FLASH
Built in 0.3-2m
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR
None / 1.8in, 118,000 pixels
OTHER
SD/MMC
POWER
Li-ion cell
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
96 x 45 x 24mm / 105g

PROS Compact size, design, ease of use, modes, battery life

CONS Limited overrides, limited zoom range

SCORES		
Features	15	TOTAL
Ease of use	17	
Image Quality	15	79%
Design	17	
Value	15	

CASIO EXILIM Z57 £210

Style is something that Casio's EXILIM range has in abundance and the EX-Z57 is no exception. The aluminium-bodied model is incredibly lightweight and small enough to fit in the palm of the hand. It has a 5MP CCD, and a 3x Pentax optical zoom lens of 35-105mm.

The big news, literally, is the LCD screen, which is a whopping 2.7ins. Such a big screen means, however, that space is limited on the back; the thumb naturally rests on the tiny zoom control and if you have large fingers it is easy to hit the up button by mistake. The 7-point multi-auto focus system works well, locking quickly and accurately onto the subject.

The only metering option is multi-pattern, which can occasionally be fooled in high-contrast situations. Power comes from a Lithium Ion battery with the capacity to take 400 photos on a single charge, which is achieved by putting the camera into the supplied dock. On the results side, colours can be a bit oversaturated and the white balance is a little sensitive but pictures are satisfactory, with results in macro mode very impressive. On the demerit side, fringing rears its head and noise is noticeable from ISO 200, much more so at ISO 400. But for the user looking for a simple and stylish camera, then the Z57, with its many scene modes and generally satisfactory results, is a decent camera.

SPECIFICATIONS

CCD
1/2.5-inch 5.25MP CCD, 5.0 MP effective
LENS
35-105mm f2.6 - 4.8
SHUTTER SPEEDS
4 – 1/2000 sec
ISO
Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES
Program, 23 BESTSHOT modes
FLASH
Built in 0.2-2.6m
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR
None / 2.7in, 115,000 pixels
OTHER
SD/MMC
POWER
Super Life Rechargeable Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
87 x 58 x 22.5mm / 130g

PROS Compact size, BESTSHOT modes, battery life

CONS No A/V connection, lack of space around back, noise at ISO 400

SCORES		
Features	17	TOTAL
Ease of use	15	
Image Quality	17	83%
Design	17	
Value	17	

FUJI FINEPIX Z1
£240

This camera is aimed at those who want to take decent pictures easily and look good when doing it. It comes in silver or black, has a 5MP sensor, and a shutter speed range of 4-1/1000sec. There's a 3x zoom equivalent to a 36-108mm lens in 35mm film camera terms and there are three pre-set apertures of f/3.5, f/5 and f/8.2.

Exposures are via a 64-zone through-the-lens metering system and focus is also of the TTL variety using a contrast detection system. The lens can focus up to 8cm in macro mode. In terms of handling, the Z1 is pretty easy to use as there isn't much to override. There are five scene and a program mode and a rather inappropriately named manual (program mode again but it lets you override the white balance, set exposure compensation and change the AF mode).

The backplate controls are all to the right of the 2.5'' LCD. There's a zooming rocker switch, two buttons (the play and Finepix buttons), a four-way controller around a menu button and a display. The Z1 is pretty nippy, being ready to shoot about a second after switch on. The focusing is quite quick although it's a bit slow between shots. In image quality terms the Z1 is a very good if unexceptional performer. There is a hint of barrel distortion at the lens's wideangle setting and the focusing needs to be set to single frame for any action shots.

SPECIFICATIONS

SENSOR
1/2.5inch CCD (Total 5.22MP, Effective 5.1MP)
LENS
36-108mm f/3.5-8.3
SHUTTER
4-1/1000sec
ISO
Auto, 64-800
EXP MODES
P +5 scene
FLASH
GN
VIEWFINDER/ MONITOR
2.5inch 115,000 pixel TFT
OTHER
640x480 15fps Video, xD
POWER
Lithium ion cell
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
90 x 55 x 18.6mm/130g

PROS Design, ease of use, construction quality

CONS Limited overrides, some lens distortion at close quarters

SCORES		
Features	16	TOTAL
Ease of use	18	
Image Quality	16	84%
Design	18	
Value	16	

KONICA MINOLTA DIMAGE X1 £300

As well as the Konica Minolta Anti-Shake system, the DiMAGE X1 has an 8.1MP chip, a Video AF system that (in Supermacro mode) gets you as close as 8cm from the front of the camera. The lens is a periscopic 3x zoom whose movement is entirely internal and the camera's sensitivity range is ISO 50-200. In handling terms there are relatively few buttons on the camera, which, given how much of it is taken up by the 2.5in LCD, is probably no bad thing. This means functions are accessed by the menus. This slows things down but otherwise, in handling terms, the X1 is pretty impressive. The Anti-Shake system means it is a little slower to respond than some other cameras, and the sheer size of the images means that image processing is also a bit slower. The Video AF is pretty nippy although it can be confused by misty subjects at infinity. Like all cameras, this one performs better in bright light than in lower lighting levels. The Anti-Shake system is good, but it will only compensate for so much shake. When the X1 is good it's very, very good, and when it is bad it's not that bad at all.

The X1 is available in Silver or Red (a nice claret) and in a Japanned black from Jessops. It's pretty easy to use as long as you don't want to use it like an SLR and in addition to being good it looks pretty fine in whichever livery you care to go for.

SPECIFICATIONS

CCD
1/1.8inch CCD (Total 8.3MP, Effective 8.0MP)
LENS
37-111mm f/3.5-3.8
SHUTTER SPEEDS
1-1/1250sec
ISO
Auto, 50-200 (Auto 50-160)
EXPOSURE MODES
P +7 scene
FLASH
4 selectable modes
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR
2.5inch 115,000 pixel TFT
OTHER
640x480 30fps Video, SD
POWER
Lithium ion cell
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
95 x 68 x 19.5mm/135g

PROS Anti-Shake, Image size, LCD size

CONS Slow in review mode

SCORES		
Features	17	TOTAL
Ease of use	17	
Image Quality	17	86%
Design	18	
Value	17	

NIKON COOLPIX S2 £240

Nikon's Coolpix S2 is a stylish-looking model brought to life by pulling down the shiny lens cover. On the back of the camera, the LCD screen is the dominant feature and as a result, all the camera's functions are in a narrow strip on the right-hand side. This might make handling for those with larger fingers a little tricky, but the controls themselves are all solid things, and have very positive click stops, so you'd really need to press something deliberately to get it to access the function. Exposure is via a selection of scene modes. There isn't, to be honest, a huge amount of user override on the S2, but its shiny pocketability makes it fairly clear this is for people who want good pictures and stylish design without much fuss.

The S2 may not give the impression of great complexity but there's evidently something pretty sophisticated going on under the shiny calm exterior, as the results from this camera showed real class. The only demerit that the camera earned was for a degree of barrel distortion on the lens at certain focal lengths (this is where horizons start to change from the traditional straight line to being slightly curved). In exposure and focusing terms, though, the S2 delivered uniformly excellent results without interference from the user. Overall style with substance. It is described as 'all weather', too, so it should put up with the damp UK seasons.

SPECIFICATIONS

SENSOR
5.1MP effective
LENS
35-105mm f/3-5.4
SHUTTER
8-1/2000sec
ISO
50-400
EXP MODES
Auto, 15 Sc, Mov
FLASH
Built-in 0.3-2.5m (Wide/ISO Auto), 0.3-1.4m(Tele/ISO Auto)
VIEWFINDER/ MONITOR
2.5" 110000 pixel TFT
OTHER
SD, All weather, USB camera dock
POWER
Li-Ion cell
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
91.9 x 59 x 22mm/140g

PROS All weather, front design, good scene modes

CONS Cramped back plate

SCORES		
Features	17	TOTAL
Ease of use	17	
Image Quality	15	
Design	16	
Value	15	80%

OLYMPUS MJU DIGITAL 800 £270

Hidden inside the rather tastefully presented curved body of the mju 800 digital is a very sophisticated camera indeed. As well as xD memory card storage, the Olympus has 19Mb of internal memory which is just about enough with the huge file sizes generated by the 8MP chip to store a few images, while you hunt down a spare card. The chip is quite big compared with the other cameras and this means the pixels are big enough to collect more light than smaller chips – and when the camera is set to a higher sensitivity, it is more able to reproduce images without noise.

The mju 800 boasts an all-weather body, which looks like a lacquered aluminium, and there could be some long term scratching issues. The controls are largely metal and should last through the camera's lifetime of constant usage. The one irritation with the mju's handling is the shininess of the concave section on the back of the camera to the left of the enormous LCD. Four control buttons are positioned on this section. Light hitting this gives a glare that makes the white on grey writing by the controls impossible to read.

The mju 800 delivers noise-free images, with a very natural rendition of colours. Exposures, thanks to the ESP metering, are very accurate, and the focusing system does its job unobtrusively and speedily. Generally, the mju 800 delivered a flawless performance in terms of pictorial quality.

SPECIFICATIONS

SENSOR
Total 8.3MP, Effective 8.0MP
LENS
38-114mm f/2.8-4.9
SHUTTER
4-1/2000sec
ISO
Auto, 64-1600
EXP MODES
P,A,S +19 scene
FLASH
Built-in, Auto plus 3 modes
VIEWFINDER/ MONITOR
None/ 2.5" 215,000 pixel TFT
OTHER
640x480 15fps Video, xD card and 19MB int
POWER
Lithium ion cell
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
103 x 58 x 33mm/181g

PROS Image quality, LCD screen, build

CONS Some backlight visibility problems

SCORES		
Features	18	TOTAL
Ease of use	16	
Image Quality	17	
Design	17	
Value	18	86%

PENTAX OPTIO WP £190

If you're looking for a camera that tells people you enjoy hanging out underwater, this is the one for you. The WP is a simple 5MP 3x zoom model with a reasonable range of features and can cope with any weather. It has plenty of shooting modes with overrides for white balance, focusing and metering available too. There's even a manual focus option using a dead-reckoning system (ie you tell it the distance to focus at and it does).

For those with little time there's a pan-focus mode that simply sets a smallish aperture and sets the lens to its hyperfocal distance. Everything from half the focused distance to infinity should be sharply rendered. Handling is relatively simple as Pentax has opted for a smaller screen size (2 inch) than most of the other models. While this makes for slightly more difficult viewing, it makes for greater separation between the buttons and thus easier handling.

One irritation is that there is no underwater white balance setting, but this is more of a fun camera than a professional underwater job, as the 5 metre/30 minute maximum diving depth/time suggests. Add very reasonable performance to the simple handling and the security of mind that goes with a water and dust-proof model and this is also ideal for those who like to play in snow, mud or white water.

SPECIFICATIONS

CCD
5MP effective
LENS
38-114mm f3.3-4.0
SHUTTER SPEEDS
4 – 1/2000 sec
ISO
Auto, 100-400
EXPOSURE MODES
Program, 18 Sc, Mov
FLASH
0.13m - 2.5m range
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR
n/a/ 2-inch TFT colour
OTHER
SD, Underwater to 5m
POWER
Lithium-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
102 x 51 x 22mm/120g

PROS Simple, Good underwater camera

CONS No manual modes, no water white balance setting

SCORES

Features	16
Ease of use	17
Image Quality	16
Design	17
Value	17

TOTAL 83%

SONY CYBERSHOT T7 £280

It is almost impossible to believe that there is within this centimetre-thick body a fully functional 3x optical zoom. The lens does not move outside the camera. This saves both time at switch-on and also ensures the lens is as protected as it can be behind its sliding combination lens-cap/on off switch. This is not a massively well-specified camera in terms of user overrides, but there is some pretty sophisticated stuff going on inside. With the exception of the lens cover, it's hard to see how anything short of an angle grinder or arc-welder is likely to damage it. All the controls are metal; the only non-metallic thing on it seems to be the screen, and you can bet Sony wanted that to be metal as well!

Using the T7 is a very simple process indeed. Just point and shoot. Some people might be slightly concerned about the tiny controls, but they are well spaced so it is not difficult to use them. The T7 shoots stills at a very high level of quality and does so speedily. Its pictures are colourful, well focused, well exposed and well processed. It's incredibly easy to use as a point and shoot model. Add in the speediness of the MemoryStick Duo card and you have a small and very nearly perfectly formed package. Even the flash seems to pump out more light than you could reasonably expect of something that's the size of a large grain of rice.

SPECIFICATIONS

SENSOR
5.1MP effective
LENS
38-114mm f3.5-4.4
SHUTTER
1/8-1/1000sec
ISO
ISO 64-400
EXP MODES
Auto, Scene modes, Mov
FLASH
Built in 0.1-2.6, Tele: 0.5-2.1
VIEWFINDER/ MONITOR
Opt/2.5" LCD
OTHER
Memory Stick Duo, MPEG 1, Pict Bridge, USB 2.0
POWER
Info Lithium
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
91.7 x 60.2 x 14.7mm/114g

PROS Easy to use, great pics

CONS Limited user overrides, touch of lens distortion

SCORES

Features	16
Ease of use	16
Image Quality	17
Design	16
Value	15

TOTAL 80%

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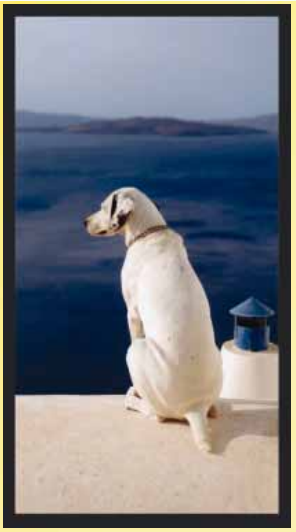

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WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA

SUPERZOOMS

Do you want DSLR level of control with having to lug around a bag of lenses? You need a Superzoom. **Jamie Harrison** tests a clutch of the latest

Why do you need a Superzoom? Well, it offers an all-in-one solution with exceptionally long telephoto lenses, so you don't need to carry around lenses and accessories, although they are available. Second, many of the cameras are remarkably compact, and could easily fit into a coat pocket, so there's no excuse not to take a camera with you. For the purposes of this test we set the minimum focal length at 300mm, and most of the cameras here go way beyond that limit.

BUYING ADVICE

The cameras offer the same level of control that you find on a DSLR, including RAW shooting, manual modes, multiple metering and focus options and so on; while compact owners still find the simplicity and convenience of Program and scene modes available.

The reason the cameras can be so compact is that they have smaller sensors than DSLRs, allowing shorter true focal lengths, or smaller lenses. The lens magnification is therefore much greater than that of DSLRs, so the longer 35mm equivalent focal lengths are possible.

The smaller sensors are, however, a compromise compared to those on DSLRs. Most have a lower dynamic range and sensitivity range so the cameras need to be used in brighter light conditions, even with the Image Stabilisation systems most now have – or a tripod is more necessary. Obviously this negates to some extent the portable nature of the cameras.

Similarly smaller sensors mean more noise, particularly in the higher ISO reaches and shadow areas. This may not be a problem for small prints, but if large A4 or A3 prints are made, it can be very noticeable.

If you can live with those compromises in order to achieve the convenience, then maybe a Superzoom may be just the camera to put on your Christmas list. ►►

FEATURES

FUNCTIONS

All of these cameras offer similar functions to a high-end SLR, such as manual modes, auto exposure modes, a choice of metering patterns and RAW shooting. Beginners benefit too, from auto and Program modes as well as scene modes such as Portrait, Landsape, Night Landscape and so on.

VIEWFINDER

Superzooms use Electronic Viewfinders (EVF) to compose the scene. These are small LCDs fitted into the top of the camera and display a video feed direct from the sensor. This means that what you see is what will be recorded by the camera. Other advantages include viewing of the menu and previews as well as superimposed information such as live histograms for checking exposure, aperture and shutter information, metering and AF points and more. Unfortunately many suffer from low resolution or poor refresh rates.

POWER

Some cameras use rechargeable Lithium-Ion batteries, which are long lasting and reusable though it is wise to keep a spare just in case. Some of the models though accept AA batteries which are readily available at many Egyptian market stalls, and other reputable shops. So no matter where you are, you should be able to find replacements.

FLASH

The pop-up flash provides extra illumination in low light and can also be used in daylight to reduce shadows and increase colour saturation.

Some cameras also have a hotshoe so that an external flash gun can be used for more power and versatility.

The hotshoe will also accept a PC adapter so the cameras could even be used in a studio with studio lights.

LENS

The length of the lens is what determines this category, with most offering a 10x or 12x zoom. For the purposes of this test we set a minimum maximum focal length of 300mm (35mm equivalent). Many of the cameras also offer a maximum aperture of f/2.8 which is good in low light and offers reduced depth of field to separate the background and foreground subject. Because of the smaller sensors used, the lenses can also be kept quite small, making the cameras more portable.

OLYMPUS CAMEDIA SP-500 UZ £300

This new model from Olympus is the smallest on test, but manages to cram in a surprising amount. Not least the 38-380mm lens and a large 2.5" LCD screen. There's a full set of exposure modes, as well as scene and video modes. Olympus has also very kindly included both JPEG and RAW shooting options.

The large screen takes up the lion's share of the camera's back plate, so external buttons are kept to a minimum, and the camera is very uncluttered. Instead the bulk of the controls are in the menu system, which follows Olympus's traditional layout.

The small dimensions and light weight makes this more of a pocketable camera than the others here, though a coat pocket rather than a jeans one. The plastic build feels fairly robust, and its traditional style and handling should appeal to the more conservative user. The EVF is very usable, with good detail and refresh rate, though, and the LCD is very clear and sharp.

Results from the Olympus are pretty good considering the size of the camera and lens. There is fringing in high-contrast areas, which can be quite severe in extreme conditions. Similarly there can be noise problems, especially at larger print sizes. Despite the lack of an image-stabilisation system, sharpness is good, but be careful at slower shutter speeds; even better, use a tripod. In summary, this is a great, versatile pocket camera with a decent feature set and generally good results. It's not quite up to the build quality of some of the other cameras, but the large, clear LCD screen is a bonus.

SPECIFICATIONS

CCD
6.37MP total
LENS
38-380mm f/2.8-3.7
SHUTTER SPEEDS
15 – 1/1000 sec
ISO
A, 80, 100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES
P, A, S, M, Auto, 21 scene
FLASH
0.3-4.5m(W) 1.2m-3.4m(T)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR
EVF /2.5inch, 130,000 pixels
OTHER
10Mb int, xD, 320x240 video
POWER
4x AA
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
105 x 75 x 71mm/285g

PROS Small, easy to use

CONS Build quality, no image stabilisation

SCORES		
Features	16	TOTAL
Ease of use	16	
Image Quality	17	84%
Design	17	
Value	18	

CANON S2 IS £340

With rangefinder-like looks and handling, the diminutive S2 IS boasts a lens of 38-432mm with image stabilisation. Despite the length, the camera barrel never extrudes more than about an inch from the main lens mounting, so the S2 always feels quite steady and the zoom action is remarkably fast, taking little over a second to zoom between the extremes. The LCD looks small in comparison to some of the others here, but 1.8" is reasonably large and it's a nice clear screen. It's a flip-out screen so can be angled for easy shooting, and flips inwards for protection. The Electronic Viewfinder is one of the better ones here, showing good information, reasonable detail and little dragging. Controls are mostly easy to reach, with all the necessary modes for the enthusiast. It doesn't record RAW files however, just JPEG. Results are remarkably good, with excellent exposures, sharpness and noise. The 5MP sensor is a bit of a let down though, with some lack of detail in high-fidelity areas.

The S2 IS is well specified and well made, and capable of great results, but you may want more resolution – though the 5MP sensor, along with the great lens, produces better results than the 6MP cameras on test. The price is good for the features.

SPECIFICATIONS

SENSOR
5MP
LENS
38-432mm
SHUTTER
15-1/3200sec
ISO
50-400
EXP MODES
P, A, S, M, Auto, 6 Scene, Mov
FLASH BUILT IN
VIEWFINDER/ MONITOR
EVF/1.8in
OTHER
SD, Image Stabilisation
POWER
4xAA
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
113 x 78 x 75.5mm/405g

PROS Build, lens quality

CONS Small files, no RAW

SCORES		
Features	17	TOTAL
Ease of use	16	
Image Quality	17	84%
Design	17	
Value	17	

KONICA MINOLTA DYNAX Z6 £350

The futuristic-looking Z6 certainly stands out from the crowd. The design doesn't, however, compromise the handling: it sits comfortably in the hand with a deep grip that doesn't cramp the right hand. Like the Canon, the lens has a short extension but a long zoom, covering 35-420mm. Unlike the other cameras here though, the Konica Minolta uses a different form of image stabilisation, an Anti-Shake CCD, instead of the more common lens-based IS systems. The system works well and does help to counteract camera shake, particularly at the longer telephoto end. The downside is the EVF, which is quite low resolution, looking grainy, undetailed and quite draggy. The LCD makes up for this with a nice 2" monitor and better resolution and refresh rate.

The Dynax Z6 has plenty of controls and shooting modes, including manual modes for enthusiasts, but lacks RAW capability, which is a shame. Unfortunately the images have a slight magenta cast and fringing along high contrast lines. Noise isn't bad in the lower reaches but higher ISOs don't stand up too well. Sharpness is very good though.

An entry-level camera really, good for general purpose, but images don't stand up to too much scrutiny.

SPECIFICATIONS

SENSOR
6MP
LENS
35-420mm
SHUTTER
4-1/1000sec
ISO
50-320
EXP MODES
P, A, S, M, Auto, 5 Scene, Mov
FLASH
Built in/ Hotshoe
VIEWFINDER/ MONITOR
EVF/2inch
OTHER
SD, Anti-Shake CCD
POWER
4xAA
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
108.5 x 80 x 84mm/340g

PROS Ease of use, Anti-Shake CCD

CONS No RAW, image quality, EVF

SCORES		
Features	17	TOTAL
Ease of use	16	
Image Quality	15	81%
Design	16	
Value	17	

SONY CYBERSHOT H1 £400

Fully specified, the H1 is reasonably small, with a rangefinder-style handling, that fits comfortably and solidly in the hand.

The camera has a bright 2.5in LCD, and a decent, though small, electronic viewfinder with good resolution and fast refresh rate. The 36-432mm lens has a top aperture of f2.8 and image stabilisation is included in the form of Sony's Super Steady Shot. Sony's Mpeg Movie VX mode gives you unlimited movies with sound. Cleverly, as well as the usual Single and continuous AF modes, the user can use the navigation pad to set the focus point anywhere in the frame, not just according to preset focus areas. In manual mode too, instead of an enlarged box in the viewfinder, the entire viewing area is magnified, making manual focus easy. There's no RAW recording, though. Pictures are pretty good for a 5MP sensor, with good detail and sharpness – just don't expect to print too large. Fringing sometimes occurs, but is usually very faint.

The H1 is very well made and has some great features, but the lack of RAW recording may put serious photographers off. Despite the 5MP chip, the results are as good as or better than the 6MP models here. It's a bit expensive though.

SPECIFICATIONS

CCD
5.1MP effective
LENS
36-432mm
SHUTTER SPEEDS
30 – 1/2000 sec
ISO
Auto, 64, 100, 200, 400
EXPOSURE MODES
P, A, S, M, Auto, 7 scene
FLASH BUILT IN
0.3m-6.8m (W) 0.9-5.2m(T)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR
EVF/2.5inch
OTHER
32Mb int, MS, MS Pro, 2cm macro, 640x480 movies
POWER
2x AA
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
108 x 81.4 x 91mm/590g

PROS Build quality, image quality

CONS No RAW, resolution, cost

SCORES		
Features	17	TOTAL
Ease of use	17	
Image Quality	17	85%
Design	17	
Value	17	

FUJIFILM FINEPIX S9500 £500

This is the world's first 9MP camera. Using a new Super CCD, the S9500 is one of the biggest cameras in the test, and has SLR-like looks and controls. This is added to by the manual zoom ring on the lens, complemented by a manual focus ring. There's plenty of options, from Manual modes to scene modes and RAW image capture options, though it's not easy to find, it's in the second sub menu of the set up menu.

Fujifilm has forgone any form of stabilisation, relying instead on higher sensitivity to stop camera shake, or indeed subject movement, which image stabilisation can't stop. The 1.8" LCD has a flip-out bracket for overhead or waist-level viewing, and the EVF has a reasonable resolution, but is quite flickery.

Does the 9MP make a difference? Not necessarily. Some image detail in JPEGs is lost under close inspection, especially subjects such as grass or hair, though RAW resolves better. Images are generally very sharp though, with only a slight amount of faint fringing.

Despite a quirky menu, the camera is great to use, and feels like a proper camera. Images are generally very good, though the extra million pixels may not add an awful lot.

SPECIFICATIONS

SENSOR
9MP
LENS
28-300mm
SHUTTER
30-1/4000sec
ISO
80-1600
EXP MODES
P, A, S, M, Auto, 5 Scene, Mov
FLASH
Built-in/ Hotshoe
VIEWFINDER/ MONITOR
EVF/1.8in
OTHER
xD, CF
POWER
4xAA NiMH
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
128 x 93 x 129 mm /745g

PROS Build quality, resolution, image quality, ISO range

CONS Slow review mode, flickery EVF, RAW hard to find, No stabilisation

SCORES	
Features	18
Ease of use	17
Image Quality	17
Design	17
Value	17

TOTAL 86%

NIKON COOLPIX 8800 VR £520

The 8800 is very well built and feels solid and comfortable, with more metal used than on most of the other cameras. The 35-350mm lens is stabilised using Nikon's Vibration Reduction system, and the zoom control is operated by an electronic rocker switch on the back of the camera. This is slow compared to the others here, as is the AF. It also has an unnerving creak and whir as it performs its extension and focusing. There's plenty on offer for the enthusiast, including manual modes, RAW shooting and a full 1.8" flip and twist screen. The EVF is very high resolution and provides good image clarity. The controls are well placed, and easy to use and navigate around, while the menu system offers plenty of enhanced shooting options, including customised settings.

Pictures are sharp throughout the lens range, and at lower ISOs they're noise free. The VR works up to a point, though some loss of detail is evident due to camera shake, but slower shutter speeds are possible. Exposures are good but at full tele, images are more underexposed than the other cameras. A solid and reliable camera that produces the results you'd expect. The handling is very good, though camera shake can still be a worry.

SPECIFICATIONS

SENSOR
8MP
LENS
35-350mm
SHUTTER
8-1/3000sec
ISO
50-400
EXP MODES
MASP, Auto, 5 Scene, Mov
FLASH
GN
VIEWFINDER/ MONITOR
EVF/1.8in
OTHER
CF
POWER
Rechargeable Li-Ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
116 x 85 x 121 mm /680g

PROS Reliable, build, features

CONS Zoom noise, zoom speed

SCORES	
Features	18
Ease of use	17
Image Quality	16
Design	17
Value	16

TOTAL 84%

PANASONIC LUMIX FZ-30 £550

A lovely camera to handle, this almost feels like an SLR, and isn't much smaller. The FZ30 is packed with features: RAW processing, Optical Image Stabilisation and a Leica 35-420mm lens with a maximum f/2.8 aperture. This makes the camera useful in low light, particularly as the sensitivity only extends to ISO 400. The lens is controlled with a manual zoom ring, allowing fast and accurate zooming; a manual focus ring is also incorporated. In manual focus mode, an enlarged central portion of the image is displayed.

The controls are all well placed and there's very little on the camera that wouldn't be included on an SLR. The bonus of a very good video mode also makes the camera an attractive proposition. There's also a decent built-in flash, along with a hotshoe for external flash units. The big problem is noise: the FZ30 produces some of the grainiest images out of the group, especially from ISO 200; and the Mega OIS system is less effective than that of the Canon. In bright light, though, the camera can produce very sharp results.

Overall, this is a good all rounder and a viable alternative to an SLR despite some issues with noise. The handling is very good indeed.

SPECIFICATIONS

CCD
8.3MP total
LENS
35-420mm
SHUTTER SPEEDS
60 – 1/2000 sec
ISO
80-400
EXPOSURE MODES
P, A, S, M, Auto, 14 Scene
FLASH
GN 7m (auto), hotshoe
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR
EVF /2in
OTHER
USB 2.0, SD, Pictbridge, Mega OIS, RAW, TIFF, JPEG
POWER
Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
141 x 86 x 138mm/740g

PROS Handling, image quality, video, features

CONS Image noise

SCORES

Features	18
Ease of use	17
Image Quality	17
Design	17
Value	17

TOTAL 86%

ACCESSORIES

BAGS

Every camera should be protected, and a decent bag should be at the top of your accessory list. Most bag manufacturers make small and stylish bags that can easily hold a Superzoom. We particularly like those from LowePro, Billingham, and Crumpler.

TRIPODS

For absolutely pin-sharp pictures, a tripod is a must, especially in low light. This is even more the case if the camera has a low sensitivity range. Models from Slik are great for the smaller cameras, while Manfrotto has a nice range of light carbon-fibre tripods to offer support without the weight.

ADD-ON LENSES

Many manufacturers offer add-on lenses that screw onto the built-in lens, to either extend the telephoto or widen the wideangle end of the lens. There are also third-party manufacturers such as Tiffen offering similar lenses over a wider choice of camera models.

ADOBE PHOTOSHOP CS2

Now you've migrated to a serious camera, you'll want to explore the wonderful world of image editing, and this is the best tool there is.
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- Red-eye removal, adaptive lighting
- Compatible with HP internal battery, Bluetooth adapter

was £149.99 **£99.99***

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SRP £199.99 **£189.99***

HP Photosmart 385

- Up to 4800 x 1200 optimized dpi
- As fast as 60-second printing
- 2.5" colour LCD
- Direct photo printing
- HP Image Zone software
- Red-eye removal, adaptive lighting
- Compatible with HP internal battery,
- HP Bluetooth adapter

SRP £199.99 **£189.99***

HP Photosmart 475

- Up to 4800 x 1200 optimized dpi
- As fast as 95-second printing (Colour Photo, Best Quality on Photo Paper)
- 2.5" color LCD
- Direct photo printing

SRP £199.99 **£189.99***

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HP 97 Tri-color Inkjet Print Cartridge (14 ml) for Photosmart 335/ 385	£TBC
HP 100 Gray Photo Inkjet Print Cartridge (15 ml)	£19.99
HP Photo Glossy 10x15cm Paper	£4.99
HP Premium Glossy 10x15cm Paper	£17.49
HP Custom 95 Series Photo Value Pack 50 Photos	£TBC
HP Custom 95 Series Photo Value Pack 100 Photos	£TBC

HP Photosmart M22

- This tough but good looking all-metal camera combines ease-of-use and weather-resistance with a range of HP Real Life technologies first seen on HP's award-winning R-series cameras. Just point and shoot for great results wherever you go.

was £99.99
£79.99

+ 256MB SD Card **£99.99***
+ 256MB SD Card + HP 375 Printer **£199.98***

HP Photosmart M417

- Building on the success of the award-winning HP Photosmart R-series cameras, this easy-to-use 5 MP camera uses the latest technology to help you take better photos. Key features include 21x total zoom and clear, bright 4.6 cm LCD.

SRP £129.99
£119.99

+ 256MB SD Card **£139.99***
+ 256MB SD Card + HP 375 Printer **£239.98***

HP Photosmart M517

- Building on the success of the award-winning HP Photosmart R-series cameras, this easy-to-use 5 MP camera uses the latest technology to help you take better photos. Key features include 24x total zoom, 5.0 cm LCD plus 2 NiMH batteries and charger.

SRP £TBC
£Phone

+ 256MB SD Card **£Phone**
+ 256MB SD Card + HP 375 Printer **£Phone**

HP Photosmart R717

- Get brilliant prints and poster-size enlargements with photos up to 6.2 MP, HP Precision 3x optical lens and 8x digital zoom. View clearly indoors or out with bright 4.6 cm LCD. Stylish stainless steel front and small enough to fit in your pocket.

SRP £199.99
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+ 256MB SD Card **£189.99***
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HP Photosmart R817

- Get up close with Pentax 5x optical lens, up to 70% more zoom than 3x lenses. Take exceptional photos at 5.1 MP for beautiful enlargements. Choose from 15 optimised shooting modes or manual controls. View indoors or out with bright 5.1 cm LCD.

SRP £249.99
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+ 256MB SD Card **£239.99***
+ 256MB SD Card + HP 375 Printer **£339.98***

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- 5.1 megapixels
- 2.0" LCD screen
- 5 x optical zoom
- 32MB internal memory

- Up to 4800 x 1200 optimized dpi
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WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA

SINGLE LENS REFLEX

The holy grail of photograpy, digital SLR cameras offer ultimate control. **Jamie Harrison** rounds up five of the best entry-level ones

You may be graduating from a digital compact, or switching from a film SLR. Either way, there has never been a better time to buy a digital SLR, and this year the shops will be bursting at the seams with reasonably priced models from most major manufacturers.

The chief advantage for most people is the amount of control offered by a DSLR. As well as all the manual controls and the opportunity to use a wide range of different lenses, the digital functions of a DSLR include the ability to choose between sRGB and Adobe RGB colour spaces, shoot in 16-bit Raw for maximum quality, as well as much more control of tone, colour and White Balance. In fact you can pretty much set the camera up to exactly the way that you want it.

Digital SLRs have many other advantages too, including a greater array of things like shutter speeds, and because of the larger sensors, noise, dynamic range and sensitivity is also much improved. In fact all the SLRs here can shoot up to ISO 1600. Because SLRs are system cameras, this means that accessories are also more readily available.

BUYING ADVICE

With so many to choose from, and seemingly little differences, what should you look for? It may be that simple brand loyalty may keep you locked into a system. For example, if you already have a load of Nikon lenses, then Nikon would be an obvious choice. In fact the best results are to be had from newer lenses designed specifically for digital sensors, so this could be a good chance to switch. Of course, if you've used previous cameras from a certain brand, you may be more comfortable continuing with that brand, as many of the functions from film cameras have been transferred to digital.

Comfort is another important feature. Everybody has a different face and hands, so try out the cameras available and see which feels most comfortable to you. ►►

FEATURES

LENS

Digital SLRs have interchangeable optics including prime lenses of fixed focal length or zoom lenses, which can fulfil the functions of several lenses. Wideangle lenses and telephoto lenses can be used, but be aware of a focal length shift due to the smaller-than-35mm film sensor. Canon cameras usually add a 1.6x magnification factor, Olympus a 2x factor and most others a 1.5x factor. So a 50mm lens on a Nikon D50 is the equivalent of 75mm.
Also be aware of the higher quality that can be achieved with new digitally optimised lenses.

VIEWFINDER

DSLRs use an optical viewfinder, using a system of mirrors in the pentaprism to offer an accurate real-life view of the subject to be taken. The advantage is a large, bright clear viewing of the scene to be captured. The disadvantage is that some information like menus or histograms can't be displayed on the viewfinder, although a series of LEDs and projections do show essential shooting information and AF points. The reflex mirror and mechanical shutter of an SLR also prevent video recording.

LCD SCREEN

Unlike compact cameras the LCD can't be used to preview and compose photographs. It is instead used to review already-taken images and access the menus, which are usually much more detailed than those of compacts. Some monitors also display a lot of the exposure information and settings.

SHUTTER RELEASE BUTTON

SLRs are much faster to shoot with than compacts, thanks to more powerful processing capabilities, larger optics and other factors. This means that SLRs typically don't have the shutter lag that compacts can suffer from. SLRs also offer a much wider range of shutter speeds, even up to 1/8000sec in some cases.

CANON EOS 350D £570

This is an incredibly popular camera, not least because it has an 8MP CMOS sensor, and a huge system behind it. The camera is also small and light, making it a good option for travel, though some people may find the purchase between the grip and lens too narrow. The body is also prone to scratching at this point from fingernails.

In terms of specification, though, there is little the Canon doesn't offer. The menu system is quick and easy to follow but is quite difficult to see thanks to the quite small LCD screen. A secondary mono LCD on the back shows current settings and camera status such as aperture and shutter, battery, white balance and so on. Most of this information is also shown in the bright viewfinder, which also has good edge-to-edge visibility.

Image quality is good, but has a softness to the tone compared to some of the other cameras. Similarly the sharpness, even in JPEG mode, needs help in post processing. Colours are slightly muted, though not unpleasant, just a little more neutral than the vivid and saturated colours produced by some of the other cameras. Where the camera really scores is noise control, with even ISO 1600 producing little flecking. RAW images are better, especially when helped along by an image processor such as Adobe Photoshop rather than the supplied software.

SPECIFICATIONS

CCD
8.3MP, 8MP effective
LENS
Canon EF/EF-S mount
SHUTTER SPEEDS
30-1/4000sec & Bulb
ISO
100-1600
EXPOSURE MODES
P, A, S, M, A-DEP, Auto, 5 Scene
FLASH
Hotshoe, GN 13m (ISO 100)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR
Optical, 1.8" 115,000 pixel LCD
OTHER
CF I/II, 9 custom functions, USB 2.0, RAW +JPEG
POWER
Rechargeable Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
126.5 x 94.2 x 64mm/485g

PROS Resolution, features, speed

CONS Soft images, small LCD, some handling problems

SCORES

Features	18
Ease of use	17
Image Quality	17
Design	16
Value	17

TOTAL 86%

KONICA MINOLTA DYNAX 5D £530

This is Konica Minolta's second consumer digital SLR and also the second to feature the unique Anti-Shake CCD, allowing slower shutter speeds to be used hand held. This feature is useful if you don't want to carry a tripod. The camera is more boxy than some of the others on test, but is comfortable to hold, and has the advantage of a large and clear 2.5inch LCD. This also displays all the necessary shooting information and camera data as you shoot, so does away with a secondary LCD. The displayed information also cleverly rotates to match the orientation of the camera, so is clearly visible and easily read in landscape and portrait mode. The camera has plenty of other features too, including the ability to take any Minolta lens with the A series bayonet.

Digitally the camera has a comprehensive White Balance system including colour temperature fine-tuning in °Kelvin. This is very well placed on the 'rewind' knob for quick and accurate white balance. The camera is not big, but is solid and comfortable and most controls are easy to reach. There are less external buttons than on the Dynax 7D, but the camera retains most of the functionality within the menu system. Images are good, with realistic colours. Sharpness is good too, and is ably helped by the Anti-Shake CCD, reducing camera shake and allowing lower ISO settings in low light, which in turn helps to reduce noise.

SPECIFICATIONS

CCD
6.3MP, 6.1MP effective
LENS
Minolta A mount
SHUTTER SPEEDS
30-1/4000sec & Bulb
ISO
100-3200
EXPOSURE MODES
Auto, P, A, S, M, Sc
FLASH
GN 15m (ISO200), hotshoe
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR
Optical, 2.5in LCD
OTHER
CF 1/II, 3 Colour space, Pictbridge, USB2, AntiShake CCD
POWER
Rechargeable Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
130.5 x 92.5 x 66.5mm/590g

PROS Anti-shake, white balance, LCD

CONS Average image quality, design

SCORES

Features	18
Ease of use	17
Image Quality	16
Design	16
Value	18

TOTAL 85%

NIKON D50 £500

Following the D70, Nikon returns with a stripped-down but also beefed-up version. Stripped down, because the camera is aimed at the entry-level market with the advanced functions tucked away in the menu. Beefed up because the metering system is inherited from the top-of-the-range D2 series. This includes the 3D Colour Matrix system II.

The camera is chunky and very comfortable to hold, without being heavy. The menu includes simple explanations of the menu items displayed on a 2inch LCD. Other information is shown on a grey LCD on the top plate. The essential controls are quickly to hand and clearly marked, while the large type of the menu system is very clear.

The camera isn't the fastest shooter in the test, but isn't far off, and with a fast SD card, JPEG shooting is practically endless. The D50 accepts Nikon mount lenses, with most recent lenses working with the camera and even older manual-focus lenses can fit onto the camera.

Images are punchy and sharp, though some of the images were very slightly overexposed. Colour is generally very good but the camera prefers to offer more saturation than some of the other cameras. RAW images are good too, but need more sharpening than some of the other models just to bring out that detail. A set of colour parameters within the menu allow simple adjustments for customised shooting which you may want to experiment with. Noise is well handled even at some of the higher ISOs, and the camera has the advantage of the ISO increments stepping in 1/3 stops. On the downside the slowest speed is ISO 200.

SPECIFICATIONS

CCD
6.24MP/6.1MP effective
LENS
Interchangeable
SHUTTER SPEEDS
30-1/4000sec, bulb
ISO
200-1600
EXPOSURE MODES
Auto, P, A, S, M, Sc
FLASH
GN 15m (ISO200), hotshoe
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR
Opt/2in LCD
OTHER
SD, 3 Colour space, Pict Bridge, USB 2.0
POWER
Li-ion
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
133 x 102 x 76mm/540g

PROS Ease of use, design, colour

CONS Occasional slight over exposure, sometimes overly contrasty images

SCORES

Features	17
Ease of use	18
Image Quality	17
Design	18
Value	18

TOTAL 88%

OLYMPUS E300 £570

One of the oldest cameras on test, the E300 was announced in February! Olympus has announced another model, the E500, but it wasn't available at the time of writing.

The E300 is one of the most controversial and unusual cameras in the group. Instead of a standard vertical pentaprism, Olympus has turned it on its side to reduce the height of the camera. This results in a square-looking camera that is not to everyone's taste.

The E300 uses the FourThirds system which has a smaller sensor and a 4:3 aspect ratio instead of a 3:2. Olympus makes several arguments in favour of this system, but essentially is to do with improved optical performance, especially at the edge of the frame, or with wideangle lenses. The final key point of the E system is that the lenses and cameras can communicate, so the camera can correct for any optical anomalies, such as barrel distortion. This means that completely new lenses have to be used.

The camera is easy and pleasant enough to use. The viewfinder is bright, though smaller than the other cameras, due to the shorter horizontal axis, and the same is said for the LCD.

Images though are quite good, though noise is more of a problem than with some other cameras. Tones and colour is very good and neutral though, while sharpness may lack the bite of some of the others, it actually looks more natural.

SPECIFICATIONS

CCD
8.8MP, 8MP effective
LENS
4/3 Mount Interchangeable
SHUTTER SPEEDS
30-1/4000sec & Bulb
ISO
100-400 (plus 800 and 1600)
EXPOSURE MODES
P,A,S,M +5 dial scene and 14 Scene
FLASH
Pop-up and dedicated hotshoe
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR
OPT/ 1.8in
OTHER
CF types I & II, RAW mode, Pict-Bridge compatible
POWER
1500mAh Lilon cell
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
146.5 x 85 x 64mm/580g

PROS Image colour and tone, technology

CONS Design, image noise

SCORES

Features	17
Ease of use	18
Image Quality	17
Design	15
Value	17

TOTAL 84%

PENTAX *IST DL

£550

This is Pentax's fourth SLR in little more than a year, but it doesn't quite match some of the spec of some of the other cameras, with a 16-segment metering system and only 3-point AF. Where it really makes its mark is in ease of use. The camera is far less intimidating than some others in the group, with a very clean, almost minimalist layout, thanks to a lack of buttons. This continues in the menu, which has the basics, but some of the finer points, or gimmickry, depending on your viewpoint, are buried in the custom menu.

The traditional looks, particularly of the silver model, will appeal to many people, and for many Pentax users the fact it can accept even ancient K mount lenses is sure to appeal.

Despite the simpler controls and metering system the Pentax DL actually churns out good results, particularly in regard to JPEGs. For the average consumer, the default settings produce images with plenty of punch, good saturation, and sharpness. Images are pretty much ready to print. In fact, in one particular case, the *ist DL was the camera in the group to accurately reproduce the 'remembered' colours of a particular landscape, even in the normally flatter AdobeRGB colour space, which says much of Pentax' colour engineers methods and research.

The camera still offers RAW recording, which like the others, requires more work than is available in the standard software.

SPECIFICATIONS

CCD
6.31MP, 6.1MP effective
LENS
Interchangeable
SHUTTER SPEEDS
30-1/4000sec, bulb
ISO
200-3200
EXPOSURE MODES
P,A,S,M, Auto, 7 PICT modes
FLASH
Pop-up and TTL hotshoe
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR
TTL Optical via Penta Mirror/2.5in
OTHER
SD storage, RAW, JPEG
POWER
Four AA or 2 CRV-3
DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
125 x 92.5 x 67mm/470g

PROS Image quality, simplicity, LCD, AA batteries

CONS Simplicity, specifications

SCORES

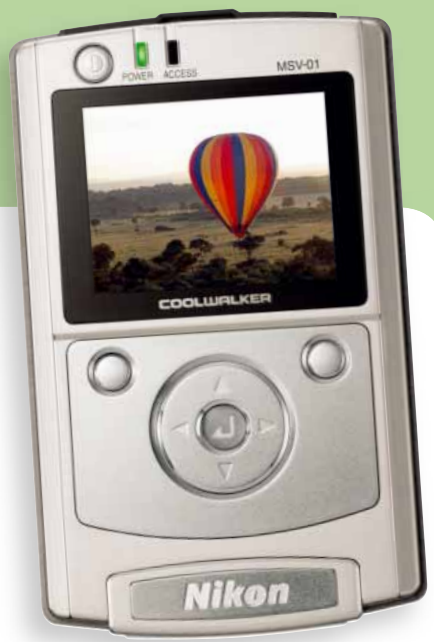
Features	17
Ease of use	18
Image Quality	17
Design	17
Value	18

TOTAL 87%

ACCESSORIES

PORTABLE STORAGE

Even large cards can fill up quickly and it's easier to download your images as you go than carry too many cards. There are loads of portable storage devices, with varying prices. We particularly like the Epson P2000's large screen and the Nikon Coolwalker for a smaller option.



FILTERS

Although you can work wonders in Photoshop, it's better to get the results you want at the time of capture. Filters are an essential tool to warm colour, reduce reflections and compensate for extremes of exposure. Buy good-quality glass filters: essentials include circular polarisers, Neutral Density Graduated filters and UV filters.

BACKPACK

If you're carrying a camera and a heap of lenses, as well as a tripod and other accessories, even a laptop, then a backpack is an essential item. Shoulder bags can put too much strain on your shoulder and twist the spine, so a safer and more comfortable option is to spread the weight evenly. Look for models from LowePro, Tamrac and Tenba.

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Konica Minolta

Konica X60

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Olympus

Mju: 600

6.0 megapixels | 3x optical | weather proof

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Price £179.00

Mju: Mini S

5.4 megapixels | 2x optical | 4x digital

5.4 megapixel, 2x optical & 4x digital zoom. Includes a strong metal body & movie mode with sound. Also available is a weather proof case that's waterproof to 3 metres.

Price £162.00

Fujifilm

Fuji F810

6.3 megapixels | 4x optical | 2.2x digital

The Fuji Finepix F810 is perfect for the camera enthusiast with quality in mind. Featuring complete manual control, 4x optical zoom lens and exceptional picture quality.

Price £229.00

Olympus

C-765

4 megapixels | 10x optical | 4x digital

Here's your chance to shoot like a celebrity, sports or wildlife photographer. With the extremely compact C-765, you're able to move into new subject areas and aesthetics.

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